

HIGH FASHION AND HIGH JINKS

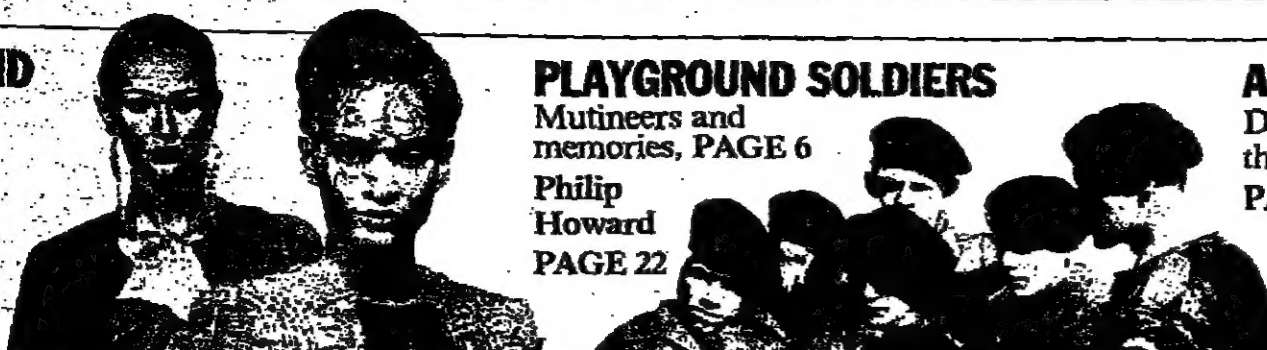
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EAT OUT FOR



Cabinet unites behind call for delay

Major rules out joining EMU in 1999

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR yesterday effectively ruled out British membership of a single European currency in 1999 with a hardened Cabinet line intended to unite the Tories in the run-up to the election.

The Government's most sceptical stance yet on the euro was seen by some Conservative MPs as the Prime Minister's boldest election initiative so far — and as a signal that he might be considering an early poll.

The statement, which also called for the European Union to delay the proposed start date of January 1, 1999, came after a 90-minute Cabinet debate on monetary union. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, emerged from Downing Street to say that it was "very unlikely" that Britain would sign up on the target date. And the Prime Minister swiftly followed with a declaration that both Britain's participation and the single currency itself were "very unlikely" at that date. Even the Euro-enthusiast Kenneth Clarke agreed, adding that he was doubtful whether anyone would be in a position to start in 1999.

Although the official wait-and-see policy was not formally abandoned yesterday, senior Cabinet sources virtually closed off any chance of Britain adopting the euro in 1999 when they said the preparatory legislation would not feature in the first Queen's speech after the election. They also said that it was unlikely that the necessary measures — such as making the Bank of

England formally independent — would come forward during the next parliamentary session, which is expected to run until the late autumn of next year.

Once the impact of the various Cabinet statements had sunk in, Conservative MPs voiced relief that an approach that could unite most of the party had been forged. The former Chancellor Norman Lamont said: "A journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. I welcome anything that makes it less likely that we shall join the single currency."

The shift added to the electioneering mood at Westminster and made several MPs wonder whether the Prime Minister — who has consistently signalled that he favours May 1 — is considering going to the country earlier. Various other developments this week, including the announcement of a replacement for the Royal Yacht Britannia and hints that the Moors murderer Myra Hindley will be kept in prison for life, have had an electoral flavour about them.

The Cabinet's move will also add to the pressure on Tony Blair to take a similar line. The Labour leadership has signalled privately that it would probably rule out joining the first wave of the single currency shortly after coming to office. Mr Blair will now face demands to make that position clear to avoid giving the Tories an advantage.

Yesterday's statements from the Cabinet came after a

discussion of a Treasury paper setting out the criteria for determining whether it was safe for monetary union to go ahead. It concluded that the necessary figures would not be available until the end of the year, and was clearly intended to vindicate Mr Clarke's view that the wait-and-see policy must be retained.

But the key shift came in the Cabinet's decision — apparently pushed by Mr Major and backed by Mr Clarke — to make a "preliminary assessment of the prospects."

It concluded that "upon the information available to us at present, we reached the conclusion that it was very unlikely, though not impossible, that countries' performance against the criteria would be sufficiently clear and stable for it to proceed safely on January 1, 1999. On that basis there is a strong argument for delay by the EU as a whole. If it did proceed without reliable convergence we would not, of course, be part of it."

Although some Treasury sources insisted last night that nothing had changed, Mr Clarke's friends said that he had been happy to go along with the new stance. He agreed it was "wildly unrealistic" both that the convergence criteria could be properly met or that Britain would be able to go in at the appointed time. "He has always thought it doubtful but he has wanted to get the best for Britain."

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Michelle, who suffered liver failure 13 days after taking drugs, including ecstasy

Drugs girl, 15 died after transplant was refused

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A GIRL aged 15 died after she was refused a liver transplant by doctors on the "moral grounds" that she had experimented with drugs and her mother was a drug user, an inquiry was told yesterday.

Carolann Paul, 37, told a fatal accident inquiry that doctors at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary told her that her daughter would die without a transplant. She was then told by Dr Niall Finlayson that a team decision had been made not to give Michelle a transplant.

Mrs Paul said: "He said the assessment had been made on moral grounds but added that it was not his decision. I asked if that meant her background and he said her background and he said her background and he said her background."

"I knew Michelle had acted irresponsibly by experimenting with drugs but knew that, when she woke up with the reality of what it could do to her she would take care of herself," she said.

Mrs Paul said that Dr Finlayson then offered to arrange a meeting with the consultant, Hilary Sanfey, and had told Mrs Paul that while he was in favour of a transplant, he was not a surgeon and could not make a surgeon operate. Mrs Paul claimed that Dr Sanfey was abrupt and certainly not compassionate. "She told me it cost £60,000 for a liver and, if they gave it to Michelle, they would be denying someone else."

"She said she believed Michelle was now medically unfit. When I asked her about the moral decision she said 'you are not listening to me, I said your daughter is now medically unfit, I am not giving her a transplant and that's final'."

then she walked out."

Mrs Paul's evidence was backed up by her family doctor, Dr John Wiseman, who told the inquiry at Aberdeen Sheriff Court that he had written to the hospital asking why she had been turned down but received no reply. A subsequent phone call from the transplant unit had informed him that there were concerns about post-transplant care because of the family history of drug abuse.

Dr Wiseman, a partner at the Woodside Medical Centre in Aberdeen, said he believed



Carolann Paul: says doctor was abrupt

Michelle should have received a transplant. "In this case you have a fairly innocent 15-year-old girl who was denied the opportunity of transplant on the basis of her psycho-social background — not a fair way of coming to a decision."

Michelle suffered liver failure in November 1995, 13 days after taking drugs, including ecstasy, at a local rave. She died six days after being admitted to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary's transplant unit.

Mrs Paul visited Michelle five days after she was taken

Continued on page 2, col 5

IRA men escape trial over break-out

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

FIVE IRA terrorists and an armed robber will never be punished for breaking out of a top security jail after the collapse yesterday of their second trial.

Mr Justice Kay ended the trial of the men, who escaped from a special secure unit at Whitmoor jail near March in Cambridgeshire, because of a two-page feature article in the London Evening Standard on Wednesday.

Max Hastings, the editor, is to appear before the trial judge today to explain why he published material that prevented the men from having a fair trial.

An earlier trial had also been abandoned and the judge said that medical evidence suggested five of them had deteriorated mentally. Legal restrictions meant that the men's criminal histories should not have been men-

tioned by the media during the trial. Mr Justice Kay said at Woolwich Crown Court: "The interests of justice cannot be served by a third attempt at this trial. It would be almost three years after the event and medical evidence suggests five of the defendants have deteriorated."

"It is very unusual for such a serious and important case to be stayed. I remind myself the evidence against these defendants is very strong, indeed they are serving long prison sentences."

But he said the law for the defendants was the same as for everyone. "They are entitled to that, whatever they have done," he said.

The six defendants were: Paul Magee, 48, jailed for life for murdering an SAS captain and Glen Goodman, a special constable; Gilbert MacNamee, 36, serving 25 years

for involvement in the IRA Hyde Park bombing; Peter Sherry, 31, serving life for conspiracy to cause explosions; Liam O'Duibhir, 34, serving life for conspiracy to cause explosions, and Liam McCotter, 33, serving 17 years for terrorist offences. Andrew Russell, a non IRA prisoner, was convicted of armed robbery and hijacking.

They had been held in Belmarsh prison near Woolwich, southeast London, awaiting trial for escaping from Whitmoor in 1994 and firearms offences.

They argued that the Evening Standard article about Belmarsh, headlined "Alcatraz on Thames — No Way Out", published on Wednesday, was prejudicial to a fair trial. It included pictures of Magee, O'Duibhir and Sherry and described them as "terrorists".

The men's first trial was abandoned after the first day when the records of the defendants were published. But Mr Justice Kay ruled that there must be a second one.

He said yesterday: "From the very outset of this case steps have been taken that the jury should not be told of the previous offences of the defendants or any IRA connections."

"No mention was made of the offences or the IRA in the opening of the case and the defence have not raised these matters. The defendants are entitled to be tried without the jury learning of their previous convictions and it is likely one or more of the jury read last night's Evening Standard."

He said the safeguards introduced had been subverted at a crucial time and it was no longer possible for justice to be done.

Man freed over 'tape confession'

A man who was secretly taped confessing to his wife that he had tried to poison her with strychnine walked free from the Old Bailey after a judge ruled the recording was inadmissible as evidence.

Michael Coombe ruled, after three days of legal argument, that the recording amounted to entrapment. Page 3

Arts cash freeze

The Arts Council of England was criticised after announcing a grants budget which means that most organisations will see no increase in funding. Page 8
Leading article, page 23

Market hits high

The stock market reached an all-time high yesterday, with the FTSE-100 reaching a peak of 4273.4, before closing at 4271.5. Page 27
Stock market, page 33

Pavarotti 'planning 3,000-pupil college on Eigg'

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE sale of Eigg descended into confusion yesterday when it was claimed that Luciano Pavarotti was interested in setting up a European classical and operatic music college for 3,000 pupils on the tiny Hebridean isle.

Highland Council revealed that it had been approached by two men claiming to represent the Pavarotti Foundation who had plans to establish a European centre of excellence.

Dr Heinz Dieter Kals, a German consultant, said that he was acting for the

Italian tenor and had the approval of Eigg's laird, Martin Eckhard Maruma, a German holistic artist, to start talks with the council. The scheme was dubbed "absurd" by islanders and "unsuitable" by the council.

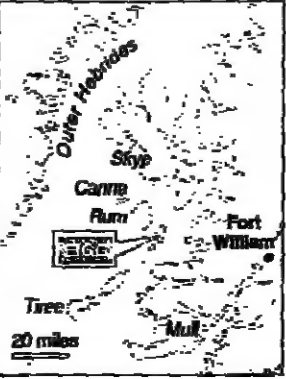
Pavarotti's possible involvement was not yesterday's only development. There were doubts as to whether Eigg — present population 63 — would even be for sale after it was claimed that one of two large loans entered into by Maruma to buy the island had been taken over by an unnamed body.

Yesterday Highland Council and

Knight Frank, the Edinburgh estate agents, were trying to contact Maruma's representatives and the so-called Pavarotti Foundation. Colin Strang Steel, at Knight Frank, said: "As far as I am concerned the island is still up for sale. If Maruma has restructured his finances, however, it may be that there is not the same pressure to sell now."

Pavarotti's agents in New York were unable to shed any light on the situation.

The developments came a day after islanders were refused lottery funding to buy Eigg in partnership with Highland Council and the Scottish Wildlife Trust.



Interest rate court win for investor

A small investor has won a victory in court against a building society for paying him uncompetitive rates of interest on his savings. The case could open the floodgates for millions of other investors. Page 27

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A good idea.

A bloody brilliant idea.

Bass BEST SELLING PREMIUM CASK ALE SINCE 1777

An election fizz crackles through the air

People say that you can tell whether it is going to rain by watching the cows. "Ah, look at those cows lying down. Rain must be imminent: the cows are preparing a dry patch." But it might just show the cows think it is about to rain. They may be wrong. One should not assume that because cows are in nature, cows understand nature.

A similar mistake is made by non-political people observing MPs. "Ah, look at those MPs down there: they are behaving as though there was about to be a general election. It must be imminent. They think that because MPs are in politics, MPs understand politics."

Not so. Most MPs have no

idea what is going on. So to report that MPs at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday were behaving as though a general election were imminent does not mean it is. It means MPs think it is. They may be wrong.

Still, the mood was unmistakable. From his tribe the PM got a loud cheer for a lame joke. A very loud cheer for a very lame joke. For a combination of loudness of cheer with lameness of joke, Mr Major achieved an awesome mismatch. The joke is almost too dreadful to insult you with it: the Opposition, said Major, were in a such a muddle about how to react to events that all he could say was "give them the facts... and they'll draw

their own confusions." Boom-boom.

This was followed by a burst of canned cheering from the government benches. When he left the Chamber at the end of the session, it was to the noisiest and most prolonged cheer he has heard there this year.

Some of Mr Major's ripostes were quicker-witted. Agreeing with Bill Walker (C, Tayside, N) about the joys of casting, he was heckled by a Labour backbencher: "Why didn't you join, then?" Major:

"I was playing cricket at the time."

Harry Cohen (Lab, Leyton) is a Little of the "cheeky monkey" school (Head Teacher: Tony Banks; Capitalist Conspiracy Studies: Ken Livingstone) rather than the "Eyre" school (Head Teacher: Tony Benn; World Citizenship Classes: Michael Meacham). Mr Cohen has made one concession to new Labour: he has shaved off his beard. His opinions remain hairy. Yesterday he attacked the notion of a Royal Yacht as a "silly state

symbol". Why not spend the money on achieving "sensible class sizes"?

Again, Major was ready. Smaller classes were not necessarily better. In the 11 to 16 bracket, "class sizes in Islington are smaller than at the London Oratory". Major got another huge cheer.

In part this was for an effective reply; but beneath the happy Tory noises lay a huge relief. Its cause, arriving late, skulked behind the Speaker's Chair like a truant behind the bike sheds. Kenneth Clarke had just hardened his stance on the single currency.

In mirror image to Tory joy, was Labour discomfiture. Tony Blair's questions to Major were based on a strategy of

Council tax victory for war veterans

War veterans have won a victory in a six-year campaign to stop councils taxing their war pensions. Barnsley, Sheffield and Wakefield were among a handful of local authorities that treated war pensions as income when calculating council tax bills. This week, after a meeting with the British Legion, they agreed not to include war pensions in the calculations. The veterans will fight on, however, to have the change introduced immediately rather than phased in over four years as the Labour-run councils propose. The councils want the Government to make up the shortfall.

Union inside GCHQ

Trade unionists are back inside the GCHQ spy centre at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, for the first time since union membership was banned there 15 years ago. Vesper Maitre, an engineering maintenance company that has taken over some contracted-out work, has agreed to recognise the GMB union for staff on the contract.

Three deny docks charges

Six ferry passengers plunged 30ft to their deaths from a dockside gangway at Ramsgate, the Central Criminal Court heard yesterday. Swedish companies FEAB and EKAB, designers and builders of the gangway, and Port Ramsgate Ltd, operators, deny charges under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Remarriages in church

Divorced people could soon be allowed to use the traditional wedding service in church if they remarry. Although they would still have to go through a registrar office or other civil wedding first, the Church of England is considering changing the rite to match the first-time wedding service, according to the *Church Times*.

Solicitors' bills rise

Negligence claims against solicitors over conveyancing work arising from the collapse in the property market total £557 million, the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund announced yesterday. Solicitors in England and Wales now face a rise in insurance premiums of 36 per cent a year for the next five years.

Hindley to mount appeal

Myra Hindley, the Moors Murderer, is to launch a court challenge against a government decision that she spend the rest of her life in jail. Her defence team will seek judicial review of the ruling that she join 24 other prisoners who have been told they will serve natural life. Hindley, 54, has not yet been officially notified of the ruling.

'Suicide pact' lesbian jailed

A lesbian who tried to murder the wife of a company director after she ended their affair has been jailed for 11 years. Heather Dickinson, 36, stabbed Philippa Orchard in the back then locked her in the bedroom of her home in Tadley, Hampshire. She told Winchester Crown Court that she and her lover had agreed a suicide pact.

Boat boy's body found

Police confirmed yesterday that the body of a boy found on the banks of the Severn was that of David Cyster, 10, who drowned when his father's boat sank during a fishing trip 11 days ago. David, of Sea Mills, Bristol, and his brother Paul, 18, were both swept away when the cabin cruiser went down off Porthead Harbour. Their father was saved.

Archers anniversary surprise

Surprising developments are promised by BBC Pebble Mill tonight for the 12,000th episode of Radio 4's *The Archers* - the world's longest-running soap opera. "We cannot comment on any particular story lines in advance," a spokeswoman said, "but I think it is safe to say there will be some unexpected elements."

Blair plan would encourage single mothers to work

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR will today announce plans to take single mothers off benefit and into work as part of his aim to transform the £90 billion welfare state if a Labour government is formed.

The Labour leader will use a speech in Amsterdam to propose that single mothers who have children aged 5 to 16 should turn up at job centres for a careers interview.

At present, single mothers do not have to make themselves available for work until their youngest child is 16. But Mr Blair will indicate that they should at least show they are willing to work when their children are much younger. While he will not go so far as to suggest benefit penalties for single mothers, he will underline the need for "rights to be matched with responsibilities".

Under the scheme, which is similar to the JET scheme operating in Australia, single mothers will also be given advice about childcare on offer locally and the after-school clubs which Labour is also planning to introduce.

Mr Blair will point out that there are now one million single mothers in Britain costing the state £10 billion. Many

more married women are working but fewer lone mothers, he will say. In Britain 4 out of 10 lone parents work, in Sweden 7 out of 10, and in France 8 out of 10.

"They are trapped on benefit because there is a passive welfare state, no national childcare strategy, an inflexible benefit system, lack of education and skills," he will say. "The people who bear the brunt are children. One in three children in poverty are in lone parent households."

Mr Blair will emphasise that the social security system ignores single mothers. "The DSS just sends them cheques and occasionally checks their addresses," he will say.

Social security officers send mothers a giro cheque every week and write to them every three weeks to check the information on their files is correct, he will point out. "The mothers tick a box, send the form back, and the cheques keep coming."

Senior Labour aides last night denied that the new scheme would be compulsory pointing out that 9 out of 10 single mothers wanted to work. They emphasised that there would be no move to

force single mothers to work. "The Tory answer is to cut benefit. We will get them off benefits and into work," Mr Blair will say.

The party would relax the 16-hour rule for lone parents under 25, which means that out-of-work lone mothers lose their benefit if they start full time study.

Labour also plans to introduce a flexible and personalised benefits service by introducing "one-stop shops" and a new jobs, education and training scheme. Other measures aimed at getting lone mothers back to work include tax relief for employers who take on the long-term unemployed.

Mr Blair will also hint at more sweeping reforms. About £90 billion a year goes to 11 million people but one in three children rely on means tested benefits. "It is nonsense to say that we will stick to their spending targets and also stick to their policies," he will say. "The Right offer no strategy. They spend more, but more are suffering. The Left of centre must restrain the welfare state to cope with the demanding changes of the society in which we live."



Two policemen from the Firearms Branch leaving empty-handed yesterday after an armed raid on a squat in Stoke Newington, northeast London. Police had received a tip-off about drugs and weapons but nothing was found.

Theft of birth certificates brings call for benefit fraud clampdown

By Arthur Leathley, Political Correspondent

PETER LILLEY, the Social Security Secretary, was told by Tory MPs yesterday to clamp down urgently on child benefit frauds after it emerged that thousands of blank birth certificates had been stolen and could be used for false claims.

The theft was seized on by the cross-party social security select committee as a prime example of the Government's failure to track down fraud-

lent claims within the £6.5 billion child benefit budget.

The committee told Mr Lilley that his department "has been asleep" in failing to take child benefit fraud seriously, and he was urged to carry out random checks to cut losses estimated at up to £100 million a year.

Tory MPs insisted that tighter controls must be introduced before next year when

the private sector takes control of the benefit.

More than 12,500 birth certificates have been stolen since 1993. The missing certificates came to light only after MPs pressed Mr Lilley's officials for information. The report complains that "such serious information was not revealed until the committee took oral evidence from the Social Security Department".

Brittan calls on Major to sign up for EMU now

By Charles Bremner

BRITAIN should sign up immediately for European monetary union because it offers a wealth of benefits, not least by locking all governments into sound Conservative economics, Sir Leon Brittan, Vice-President of the European Commission, said yesterday.

"Why not sign on the dotted line today? I for one would be delighted if we did," he said. In his latest foray into the pre-election mainstream over Europe, the former Tory Cabinet minister ridiculed Eurosceptics for attacking a project that gave all the European Union the same economic medicine that the Conservatives had successfully administered in Britain.

"Economic and monetary union is a radical but Conservative idea: it represents minimal government intervention. It promotes free markets. It locks future governments, both here and on the Continent, into sound Conservative economics."

Sir Leon's impassioned speech in London last night was certain to prompt new charges of interference from

some Conservative colleagues. His argument of "locking in" Conservative policies for the future clearly envisaged the possibility of a Labour victory at the election.

Sir Leon listed the array of benefits that he said would accrue from the project and British membership. EMU, due to be launched in January 1999, would ensure prosperous markets for British business in Europe: it would cut transaction costs by up to £3 billion a year, far more than Britain's net contribution to the EU budget.

It would give Britain a voice in a powerful new monetary and political bloc. "EMU will not automatically deliver a golden age of economic prosperity. But if we design and implement it wisely, it offers us the best chance we have had so far to break the bad economic habits to which we are addicted, to promote the economics of deregulation, to bring Europe and give Britain a more powerful international voice."

Leading article and Letters, page 33

Girl 'denied liver'

Continued from page 1

to hospital. "When I was approaching the ward I heard a hysterical, fearful scream and I knew it was Michelle," Mrs Paul said.

"I was very alarmed because I felt something was seriously wrong. Michelle seemed unconscious, her face was swollen. She was screaming and didn't respond to my voice. I had to lift her eyelids but there was only a fixed stare."

Mrs Paul was told by staff that they believed Michelle had taken some drugs while in the hospital, and that she had confessed to taking ecstasy before being admitted.

Mrs Paul, from Aberdeen, admitted she herself was a drug user who had spent

seven months away from the family home at a Church of Scotland drug rehabilitation centre while suffering from hepatitis C. She was regarded as a model patient.

The court heard that her elder daughter Marie, 19, had "dabbled in drugs" and that Michelle's step-father, John Paul, was in jail for drug-related offences. Escorted by guards from Perth Prison, he visited her three times as she lay dying, as did her natural father, Michael Miligan.

A spokeswoman for Edinburgh Royal Infirmary said last night the hospital did not want to comment ahead of its doctors giving evidence but a statement would be made at the end of the hearing.

The hearing continues.

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Husband goes free despite 'poison confession' to wife

By Richard Dore

A MAN who was secretly taped confessing to his wife that he had tried to poison her with strychnine walked free from the Old Bailey yesterday after a judge ruled the recording was inadmissible as evidence.

John Copeland, 61, of Southgate, north London, was arrested after his Greek-born wife went to police with the recording. Police then investigated the deaths of three other women he had known: his first wife, a former landlady and a friend.

Judge Michael Coombe ruled, after three days of legal argument, that the recording amounted to entrapment. He said that it showed Mrs Copeland offering to stay with her husband on condition that he admitted trying to poison her. The judge decided that this amounted to trickery or inducement under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

The tape, made by Eftychia Copeland, 54, formed the principal part of the prosecution's case. It offered no evidence on the charge of attempted murder and two of administering poison after the judge's decision.

Mr Copeland declined to comment as he left court. His estranged wife was at home in Enfield, north London, last night where a friend said she felt "let down" by the judicial system.

The court was told that Mrs Copeland had hidden the tape recorder in her car when she met her husband outside a Beefeater restaurant to talk about a reconciliation. She believed that bouts of illness had been bought on by her husband poisoning her meals: she had been taken to hospital after collapsing with stomach pains and vomiting, and suffered frequent diarrhoea and other stomach upsets.

Once Mr Copeland, a retired civil engineer who once worked for Camden council in London, was arrested in 1995, police reopened the files into



Eftychia Copeland: she made secret recording



John Copeland: denied attempted murder

the deaths of his first wife Patricia, as well as a former woman friend, Eunice Bradshaw, and a former landlady, Louise Young. The police, based at Enfield, worked in conjunction with the National Poisons Information Centre, but no charges were brought.

Mr Copeland's first wife had died in 1969 at the age of 30. An inquest was told that she took an overdose of drink and drugs at the couple's home and the official cause of death was barbiturate poisoning. She was known to have been a heavy drinker.

His landlady, who was in her 60s, died in 1984 from an illness after she had taken Mr

Copeland into her home as a lodger and they had become close friends. Two years later, Mr Copeland's former girlfriend died aged 62 from a suspected heart attack.

Mr Copeland met his second wife through a lonely hearts advertisement which he placed in a north London newspaper. They married at Enfield register office in July 1994.

His daughter by a former marriage then married Mark Perrin, 37, who Mr Copeland was also alleged to have tried to poison, this time by placing weedkiller in his tea. Mr Perrin was rushed to Chase Farm Hospital, north London, where he was detained for eight days.

He suffered acute liver failure and doctors suspected he had hepatitis. The prosecution offered no evidence on the charge of administering poison to him.

Judge Coombe told the prosecution team: "You have obviously taken immense care in this difficult case from the beginning. I certainly agree with the view of the Crown and order that formal not guilty verdicts be entered."

Last night a friend of Mrs Copeland said: "She made the tape out of sheer desperation so someone could help her. This was crucial evidence and she put her life in jeopardy to get the confessions on tape."

It is not the first time that courts have refused to allow evidence when secret recordings have been made of suspects. The case against Colin Stagg, accused of the murder of Rachel Nickell on Wimbledon Common, collapsed when a judge ruled that attempts by an undercover policewoman to encourage Stagg to confess had amounted to entrapment.

In another recent case, Keith Hall was cleared of the murder of his wife, Patricia. The jury was not allowed to hear a tape made by an undercover policewoman in which he is alleged to have confessed to the killing.



Margaret Orpen claimed that she made love with Mr Glover in his car up a quiet country lane in October 1995

Vicar cleared of sex charge after court told of accuser's delusions

By Paul Wilkinson

A VICAR accused of having sex in his car with a woman parishioner was cleared yesterday after a church court was told that she suffered delusions resulting from a psychiatric disorder.

The Rev Edward Glover, 39, married with two daughters, had denied committing adultery with Margaret Orpen on the front seat of his Volvo in a quiet lane in his parish of Trindon, Co Durham.

Mrs Orpen, 39, a mother of three, had turned to the priest for counselling in 1995 after the death of her father. She had claimed that she had become pregnant as a result, but had later miscarried.

A Church of England consistency court sitting at Auckland Castle, the 14th-century country seat of the Bishop of Durham, was told that new evidence had been produced which questioned her state of mind. Other medical evidence

would also show that she was not pregnant at the time and there were doubts of other evidence she had brought forward.

The Rev Rupert Bursell, QC, the diocesan chancellor and a circuit judge, who presided over the hearing, described the case as one of "enormous sadness" for both people. He said: "It is the psychiatrist's view that the allegations of adultery were prompted by her delusional state and have no basis in fact." He agreed to a request from the prosecution that the charge of conduct unbecoming a clerk in Holy orders should be withdrawn.

Outside the hearing, Richard Langdon, Mr Glover's solicitor, read a statement in which the vicar said he was "very pleased" by the decision. He said: "He has been accused by Mrs Orpen of many things and his family has been harassed with telephone calls at all hours of the day and night. Allegations



Glover: he denied committing adultery

have been made to the police, to the press and to anyone who would listen.

"It has been a difficult time for him, but he is deeply grateful to his true friends who have supported him, he looks forward to getting back to work and getting on with his life." He said that Mr

Glover felt only sadness for Mrs Orpen. After the hearing the Rev Michael Turnbull, the Bishop of Durham, said he would find a new post for the priest as soon as he was passed medically fit. Mr Glover resigned as priest-in-charge of St Albans and St Pauls at Trindon a year ago, claiming stress-related problems. He and his wife Margaret had separated before the adultery allegation and still live apart.

Mr Langdon said there was no criticism of the way the case, which is estimated to have cost the church around £25,000, had been brought. Mrs Orpen's claims were first aired in *The Sun* in December 1995. Nicola Harding, the solicitor presenting the case against Mr Glover, read out a note that Mrs Orpen had passed to her that morning in which she said: "I do not withdraw my allegation of adultery, but I realise that there is not enough evidence to prove the case. I agree to the case being withdrawn."

Store worker, 77, beats sell-by date

By LERISSE SMITH

A WOMAN of 77 has struck a blow for older workers by beating 1,000 applicants to a job on a supermarket fish counter.

Doris Morse, a great-grandmother, lost her previous job as a nursing home assistant last year when her employers discovered her age. She was turned away by ten other companies when she sought a new job, but is now the oldest employee of the Asda chain.

"I don't want to sit around twiddling my thumbs all day. I want to work and meet people," said Mrs Morse, from Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan. "I also love fish. I'm pretty fit for my age and I have plenty of experience as a fishmonger, so I suppose I fitted the bill." She began her

working life as a fishmonger in 1938 with her late husband, George. Steve Maher, the store manager, said: "There was a lot of competition but Doris beat all the other candidates because of her personality and experience."

Mrs Morse, who has 15 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, added: "Many employers take the attitude that you shouldn't work after a certain age but they forget there are so many people out there with valuable experience and a lot to offer."

She will earn £3 for a 20-hour week at Asda's Cardiff Bay branch, which opens in March. She will lose virtually the same amount in housing benefit as a result, but prefers to work.

Sister of Whitaker's chief joins son's coup attempt

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE son and sister of the chairman of the Whitaker's publishing house were united last night in their insistence that he should stand down.

Sally Whitaker, group managing director of J. Whitaker & Sons Ltd, publisher of *Whitaker's Almanack* and *The Booksetter*, said it was time for her brother, David, to retire as chairman. She said that she would not be diverted from achieving this and made it clear that she had the support of her fellow directors, of whom David Whitaker's son, Martin, is one.

Yesterday *The Times* disclosed David Whitaker's claim that his son was behind a coup to oust him. Miss Whitaker responded that her brother was putting himself before the



Sally Whitaker: urged brother to stand down

company. "David is pursuing his own interests at the expense of the company and all those who work for it. He is in a minority of one," she said. In a statement Miss Whitaker added that she re-

gretted that he had felt the need to talk about his grievances, although she understood "it must be very difficult to accept that it is time to step down from a role which one has held for many years".

Last night Miss Whitaker, 57, and her nephew, 38, put on a united front and posed for a photograph at the publishing house's offices in Bloomsbury, London. The board is understood to have met yesterday without David Whitaker.

David Whitaker had said that his sister was to step down for Martin to become managing director, and that another chairman was to take his place. He said that he would step down at some point, but not yet. "Punches of this kind are ugly. I would wish to make my contempt widely known."

Driver fined for dozing in queue

By A STAFF REPORTER

AN EXHAUSTED driver caused a traffic jam after he fell asleep in stationary traffic. As the cars in front drove off, Hugh Fingland remained slumped over the steering wheel, oblivious to angry motorists waiting behind him.

Eventually the mortified businessman was awoken by a policeman after a woman queuing behind his Audi called the police on her mobile telephone from the A10 at Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire. Fingland, 53, admitted careless driving when he appeared before magistrates in Cambridge yesterday and was fined £160. Sentencing him and ordering him to pay £30 and have his licence endorsed with three penalty points, magistrates said the offence

was "quite bizarre". He told the court that he had had a very busy week, with two sleepless overnight flights to South Africa and having to catch up with work.

He had had felt very drowsy as he sat in the queue, Fingland, from Sutton, Cambridgeshire, said: "Needless to say, I'm very embarrassed about the whole thing, never more so than when the police officer tapped me on the shoulder and I realised what had happened."

Cambridgeshire Police said it was fortunate that the car had been stationary. "Concentration levels fall as you become more tired and this is a real hazard when driving," a spokesman said, adding that motorists should take rests.

Radio 1 to serve breakfast from the North

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE Radio 1 disc jockey Mark Radcliffe joked yesterday that it took half an hour to negotiate the removal of the station's showcase breakfast show up the M1 from London to Manchester.

Radcliffe, 38, from Bolton, told Matthew Bannister, Controller of Radio 1, that that was the price he would have to pay to persuade him and his partner, Marc Riley, known as The Boy Lard, to succeed Chris Evans. It was not money, he said, as he was wheeled out by BBC public relations officers at the Lass O'Gowrie public house around the corner from the BBC's northern headquarters.

Asked what set him apart from Evans, he said: "About £25 million. I would imagine." Then he added: "There is a kind of illusion that there is this big bag of money with breakfast show written on it. I left at the reception desk every Friday, and that they have Tipped out Chris Evans's name and put ours on. I can assure you that is not the case. We are getting considerably less than Chris Evans, but we are happy with the money."

There are many more differences between Radcliffe and his predecessor. Radcliffe, the son of a journalist, has a grounding in classical music, specialised on his late-night Radio 1 show in promoting smaller indie bands and cultivates a caustic, but affectionate, wit. Unlike Evans, a Manchester United supporter, he follows the unfashionable Manchester City.

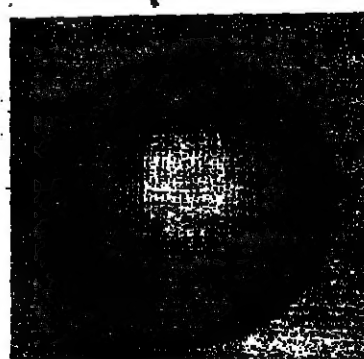
Breakfast time for millions of youngsters will be less of the rollercoaster ride it was under Evans. The new team, responsible for bringing the current No 1, *Whitewash*, to a wider audience, have some assurances that they will be able to play their own type of music.

Radcliffe played down his more sophisticated style by posing with Riley, pint of Manchester's finest in one hand and cigarette in the other, with a gritty northern city backdrop. He refused an outside alarm clock proffered by one hopeful photographer.

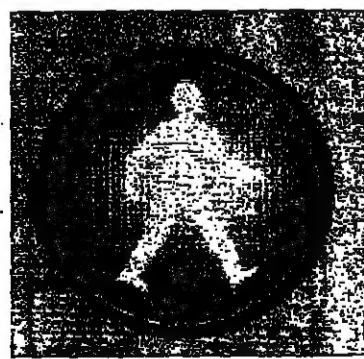
Told to smile and look happier by the phalanx of cameramen, Radcliffe shot back: "We are miserable as sin. We don't want to do the breakfast show because it means getting up at 5 o'clock in the morning."

Evans, whose independent production company was reputed to earn £1.4 million for the contract, left after he was told that he could not work a four-day week. Radcliffe, who also presents *Charnel 4's* music programme *The White Room*, takes over the show from February 17.

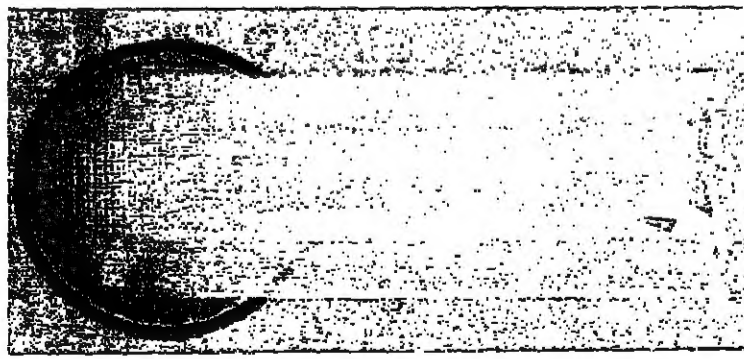
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BY DENIS NEWSON AND DANIEL MCGRORY

The immigrants were hidden in false compartments on cargo ships sailing from Rotterdam to British ports. They were met and taken to safe houses across the country, where they were given advice

"Many illegally took jobs in Holland so that they could

Last night police were questioning the crews of six Dutch freighters which were thought to have been involved in the smuggling. Officials said that more arrests could be expected.



BY OLIVER AUGUST

The company said it had agreed to the union's request to meet the chairman of Ford in Europe, Jac Nasser, probably in the next week.



BY EMMA WILKINS

divorce last summer to include planning her diary and dealing with press inquiries.

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deal going

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

Research from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre in Dallas has confirmed the existence of Gulf War syndrome. Greater than normal exposure to insect repellents, fies collars and - the anti-nausea pyridostigmine - were associated with the syndrome in Vietnam war veterans. Risk of joint and muscle pain, muscle weakness and fatigue, and changes in sensation in the hands and feet, were proportional to the amount of exposure to the government-issued insect repellent, which contains 75 per cent deet (N,N-diethyl p toluamide). Cognitive impairment - loss of intellect - was

the death of several British pets—containing diazinon, an organo-phosphorous pesticide. Diazinon compounds can be absorbed through the skin and should be applied only by someone wearing rubber gloves. The pet should not be handled by any child for at least six hours after application. Ivor Deitsch, who owns the Wellington Veterinary Pharmacy in Knightsbridge, said that pets treated with fenitrothion

When deet has been too liberally applied to children, it can cause a dangerously slow heartbeat. Deet has also been known to damage children's brains, causing fits and a manic psychosis. Soldiers and travellers to countries where malaria is endemic will be relieved to know that there is a safe, and as yet equally effective, alternative. It is an extract of refined lemon eucalyptus oil and is marketed as Mesi-Guard Natural.

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Dixons

There's a great deal going on

French authorities suppressed the truth and allowed innocent farmer to be sacrificed, says author

Cold War scientist 'was killed by Soviet hit squad'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS

SIR: Jack Drummond, the scientist and civil servant murdered with his family in 1952 during a camping trip in the South of France, was the victim of a Soviet counter-espionage hit squad, according to a book published today.

William Reymond, a French journalist who has spent several years researching the case, claims Drummond was a British secret agent killed by assassins working for the Soviet Union and that Gaston Dominici, the French peasant found guilty of the crime, was innocent.



Gaston Dominici made a confession to gendarmes after his arrest, but retracted it within hours

In *Dominici Not Coupable* — *Les Assassins Retournés* [Dominici Not Guilty — The Assassins Uncovered], Reymond says the truth was suppressed or ignored by French officials "who could not admit... that a hit squad armed by the Soviets had been able to strike at foreigners in the very heart of France".

The bodies of Drummond, 61, his wife, Anne, 46, and their daughter, Elizabeth, 10, were found on August 5, 1952, near their tent outside Lurs, in Provence. Drummond and his wife had been shot and their daughter beaten to death with a rifle butt.

After an investigation lasting more than a year, police obtained a confession from Dominici, 76, the illiterate head of the large farming family that owned the land on which the family had been camping. Dominici retracted his confession within hours, but partly on the evidence of family members, who also

later changed their minds. Dominici was condemned to death in 1954. Amid widespread concern the sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Dominici was pardoned on Bastille Day 1960 by de Gaulle and died in 1965.

According to Reymond, far from being the victim of random violence, Drummond was a British agent who had been killed in the ferocious battle for scientific intelligence during the Cold War.

Dominici was allegedly sacrificed because the French authorities were not prepared to admit to the murder of an allied spy "under the noses of counter-espionage, the military and police". Drummond, an expert in nutrition, was recruited by British intelligence in 1944 and later worked on the top-secret chemical defence project at Porton Down. He was knighted during the Second World War.

Citing fresh American evi-

dence, Reymond alleges that, during the postwar years, the nutritionist was active in Operation Paperclip, the Anglo-American attempt to recruit Nazi scientific expertise, and may have taken part in Project 63, aimed at protecting allied scientists and others with specialised knowledge from the Soviets.

"The Russians knew all about this and employed the same methods, with a certain

predilection for kidnapping and assassination," Reymond writes. "In 1952, at least three scientists were victims of the Soviet riposte: a German, Erich Kramer, and two Britons, Dr Peck and... Sir Jack Drummond."

Reymond writes that, four days after the murder of the Drummonds, German police arrested one William Bartkowski, a petty crook wanted for a number of thefts and other crimes. During an interrogation by German police in November, Bartkowski admitted taking part in the murders of both Kramer and Drummond and named as his accomplices Carlo Solte, a Greek, a Swiss identified as Moradis, and Roman Moesto, a Spaniard.

According to a written account of the interrogation, dated November 12, 1952, and obtained by Reymond, Bartkowski said he had been recruited in prison by a Russian who told him to contact the three men on his release. Solte, Moradis and Moesto "in addition to their criminal activities, worked for the Soviets", Reymond writes. The



Sir Jack with his wife, Anne, and daughter, Elizabeth. Their bodies were found by Gaston Dominici's son

German authorities passed the information to France and on November 24, 1952, Charles Gillard, a senior French investigator, wrote a report declaring: "Bartkowski had everything to fear by admitting to the murder of the Drummonds. But he did not hesitate to do it. What interest could he have had in doing so, if not to reveal the truth?"

Bartkowski is believed to have made similar statements to British Special Investigation Branch officers.

Inspector Gillard later went back on his declaration because, as a "conscientious civil servant... he had been instructed to do so", according to Reymond.

The Dominici clan has long campaigned to clear Gaston's

name. Gustave Dominici, the patriarch's son who died last year, found the Drummonds' bodies. He first corroborated his father's confession, then retracted what he had said.

Years later Gustave claimed he and his father had made their statements because the gendarmes mistreated them. Alain Dominici, Gustave's grandson, has twice demand-

ed that the case be reopened. The Foreign Office said the claims would have to be "properly considered" once the book was available.

One aspect of the Drummond case has defied explanation. Four years after Drummond's death, his former secretary, June Marshall, was murdered in Dieppe. No one has ever been charged.

Laundryman died in tumble drier

A SAFETY warning has been sent to laundries after a man was killed in a tumble drier.

Ray Washbrook, 26, of Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, died last November from multiple head injuries after entering a drier to free a piece of linen. The machine started up and he was trapped inside in temperatures up to 95F during its 20-minute cycle.

Warrender Aircraft Services in Stevenage, for whom Mr Washbrook was working, runs a fully automated washing and laundry service for airlines. The tumble drier had been in use for only three weeks. Laundry is placed on a conveyor belt and fed into three large driers.

An inquiry is still to be held but the Health and Safety Executive has alerted other users of the same equipment.

A spokesman for the HSE said: "It is believed the operator was attempting to remove a piece of linen which had not been ejected from the rear of the drier at the end of a cycle."

"He entered the conveyor enclosure, taking with him the interlocking key to ensure safety, and climbed into the drier through the front-loading door, apparently believing himself to be safe. When he removed the piece of linen, however, it allowed the rear door to close and the machine began a new cycle which trapped him inside."

The HSE has told other users how to take steps to avoid similar accidents. "There are many continuous batch washing lines in use in laundries throughout the country and users are advised to review safety systems."

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Labour and anti-gun lobby condemn cadet force plan

By Alice Thomson
and David Charter

LABOUR rounded on government proposals to encourage schoolchildren to become military cadets yesterday, claiming that it could cost taxpayers more than £5 billion. They were joined by gun-control campaigners and teaching unions, who said they were horrified at plans to help 13 to 22-year-olds to join the cadets and learn how to use firearms. Teachers dismissed the scheme as a "pre-election gimmick".

Scottish teaching unions said that after Dunblane it was "extremely unlikely" that any school would start a cadet force.

They urged John Major to promote less militaristic training. The anti-firearms lobby was "incredulous" that ministers could even suggest teaching 13-year-olds to shoot in the wake of Dunblane.

But Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, suggested that an expansion of the cadet forces could keep disadvantaged children away from "the temptations of the modern world".

The Prime Minister told MPs: "I strongly encourage participation in cadet forces and hope to see an increase in the number of youngsters taking part."

Teachers' leaders warned against the plan. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers,

said: "Discipline, teamwork and leadership are all important qualities, but it is doubtful whether they can be instilled by press-ganging unwilling pupils."

Jill Marshall-Andrews, of the Gun Control Network, said that the Government appeared to recognise the danger of guns with its Firearms (Amendment) Bill, but was encouraging the next generation "to embrace guns".

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, said the proposal was a direct response to Labour's millennium volunteer scheme for 100,000 young people to do work in the community.

Philip Howard, page 18

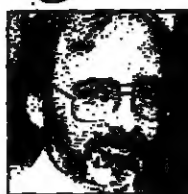


Boys from the Combined Cadet Force at the Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe, practise drill yesterday

Hoping for a change in the weather, or a note from mother

ONE-TIME cadets compelled to square-bash the school playground every Monday afternoon and crawl at midnight through Perthshire bogs twice a year — unless they had a note from mother — find it hard to understand why anyone should want to do it voluntarily.

But they were serious days then, with conscription not quite abolished and the basic skills of warfare still on the curriculum for 14-year olds at



Alan Hamilton (Combined Cadet Force, 1st Battalion The Royal Scots, 1957-58) recalls his days in uniform

many a grammar school. Pupils were thought to benefit from the life-enhancing skill of dismantling, cleaning and reassembling a Bren gun in the dark. Being shouted at by

the masters who officered the platoon was no worse than being shouted at in class, except that it was done in the outdoors of a bitter winter. Being shouted at by class-

mates who had wormed their way up to corporal or even sergeant, and being forbidden to shout back, was an indignity against which the madly itching serge of Royal Scots junior battalions was no defence.

Many are eminent who have endured boy soldiering. Auberon Waugh, editor of *The Literary Review*, bore arms for three years at Downside. He said yesterday: "My school was a hooligan

school, so we were not allowed to go to camp. I remember carrying an old Lee Enfield .303. It was almost as big as me. It didn't do a lot for me but it was better than playing rugger."

Professor Norman Stone, a prefect at Glasgow Academy, recalled being promoted to corporal in his CCF unit: "They thought it a disgrace that a prefect should be in the ranks." He found that the Blanco produced a skin aller-

gy on his hands. John McCrick, the flamboyant Channel 4 racing commentator, enjoyed his time as a cadet at Harrow. "I was a brilliant field commander even though I was hopeless at everything else at school."

"I don't think the government scheme will achieve very much because it will not appeal to the problem child: that it is meant to be targeting. As it is not compulsory, only those who are

already team-spirited will join."

Denis Compton, the former England cricketer, believes his soldiering at Bell Lane School, Hendon, north London, in the 1930s gave him a sense of discipline. He drilled but cannot remember carrying guns: "It was designed to make you a good boy. I really do think it was a worthwhile experience."

Count Nikolai Tolstoy rose to the illustrious rank of

sergeant in the CCF at Wellington: "I was a Bren gun instructor but I remember that most of the time it was rather boring. It's a male instinct to join the military, and good for discipline. But today the CCF will have to be a bit more imaginative than it was in my day."

Today's cadet forces are mostly voluntary and vie with a wide range of other activities, sporting and intellectual, for the attention of teenagers.

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How the sixth form seized an armoury and shut a school

A little-known mutiny shook a Hampshire school in 1957. Robin Young took part.



HOPES of any social benefits, which might accrue from universal service in school cadet forces could well backfire. In the early summer of 1957, Peter Symonds' School in Winchester was scene of a mutiny centred on the combined cadet force's armoury. Pupils supplied themselves with .303 rifles, Bren guns, thunderflashes, and blank and live ammunition. All the classes were brought to a halt.

As the insurrection's appointed press officer, the present writer can perhaps now gain the national press coverage the schoolboys were unaccountably denied in the public prints of the time.

The school revolt followed the death of a well-respected headmaster Dr P. T. "Doc" Freeman in the autumn of 1956. The senior chemistry master was appointed acting headmaster in his place. Discipline rapidly foundered.

In May 1957 some of the school's senior boys realised that, with control of the armoury, with its store of guns and ammunition, they could bring the school to a halt.

The armoury was duly seized and the nearby RAF hut commandeered as headquarters, command post and social centre. The school staff's attention was so completely distracted that all the classrooms emptied, and 550 pupils took to the playing fields, or went on out to the streets of Winchester.

I was then 17. I spent my morning telephoning *Press Street* newspaper, alert them to the fact that children had taken charge of the school. Hints from the *Daily Herald*, the *New Chronicle*, and the *Daily Mirror* duly arrived on the scene and were regaled with sensational interviews by excited third-formers and school prefects holding guns.

Photographs were taken but so far as I know no account appeared in even the local press. (One local newspaper was owned and edited by the wife of a member of the school staff.) A party of sixth-formers, incensed by supposed slights suffered at the hands of the acting headmaster, besieged him in his upstairs chemistry laboratory, man-handled him, and finally dangled him out of the window in a dustbin.

Pupils also called the police to the school, alleging that staff were brutalising them, and took pains while officers were in attendance to draw attention to the lack of security that had allowed

them to arm themselves with rifles and thunderflashes.

No shots were fired but school classes were cancelled for the day and many pupils did not bother to resume school until a new headmaster was appointed later in the year.

In an earlier incident, two boarders at the school had broken into the armoury and stolen an Enfield .303 with which they plotted to assassinate their housemaster. Their plot involved puncturing the tyres of his car so that he would pursue them on foot and could be ambushed and shot, preferably dead.

The housemaster, recounting this incident to Stuart Weir — later an editor of the *New Statesman* — while discussing his discovery that the school canteen had become a poker school where games were played for high stakes, advised: "Remember everything that happens here. You could dine out on it for years to come."

The school rebellion was followed by a swift decline in CCF numbers when it was discovered that membership of the cadet force could not, in fact, be made compulsory as had been supposed.

Suddenly the school became a centre for conscientious objection, with fifth and sixth formers filing applications to become "non-joiners".

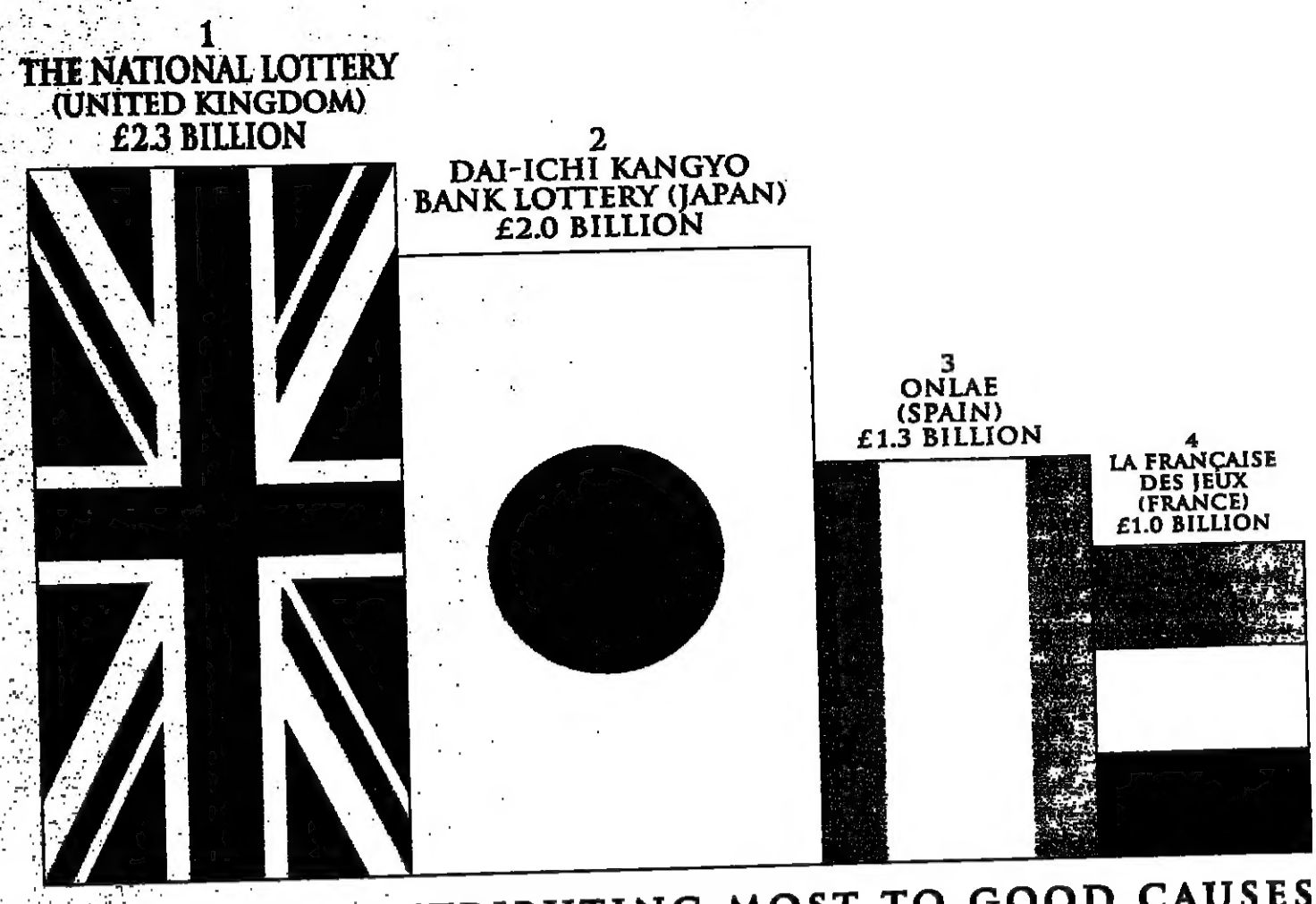
Senior "non-joiners" were then put in charge of marshalling the school's youngest pupils on marching exercises and spent their time playing with platoons of youngsters as if they were dodgem cars, deliberately shouting commands which would make them crash into each other.

Thereafter they competed to place their platoon first in the queue for the school lunch.

Not all the school's cadet force history was a complete failure. One RAF cadet, "Monk" Truman, graduated to become an RAF fighter pilot, but sadly died young in a crash in the Bristol Channel.

Others went on to Sandhurst and Cranley, but held no more important a place in school memory than the leaders of the 1957 rebellion, or the two navy cadets who stole their buses' inflatable Zodiac and were next heard of cruising canals in Dorset.

Peter Symonds' is now a smooth-running academic machine. What could happen when it gets its cadet force back is anybody's guess.



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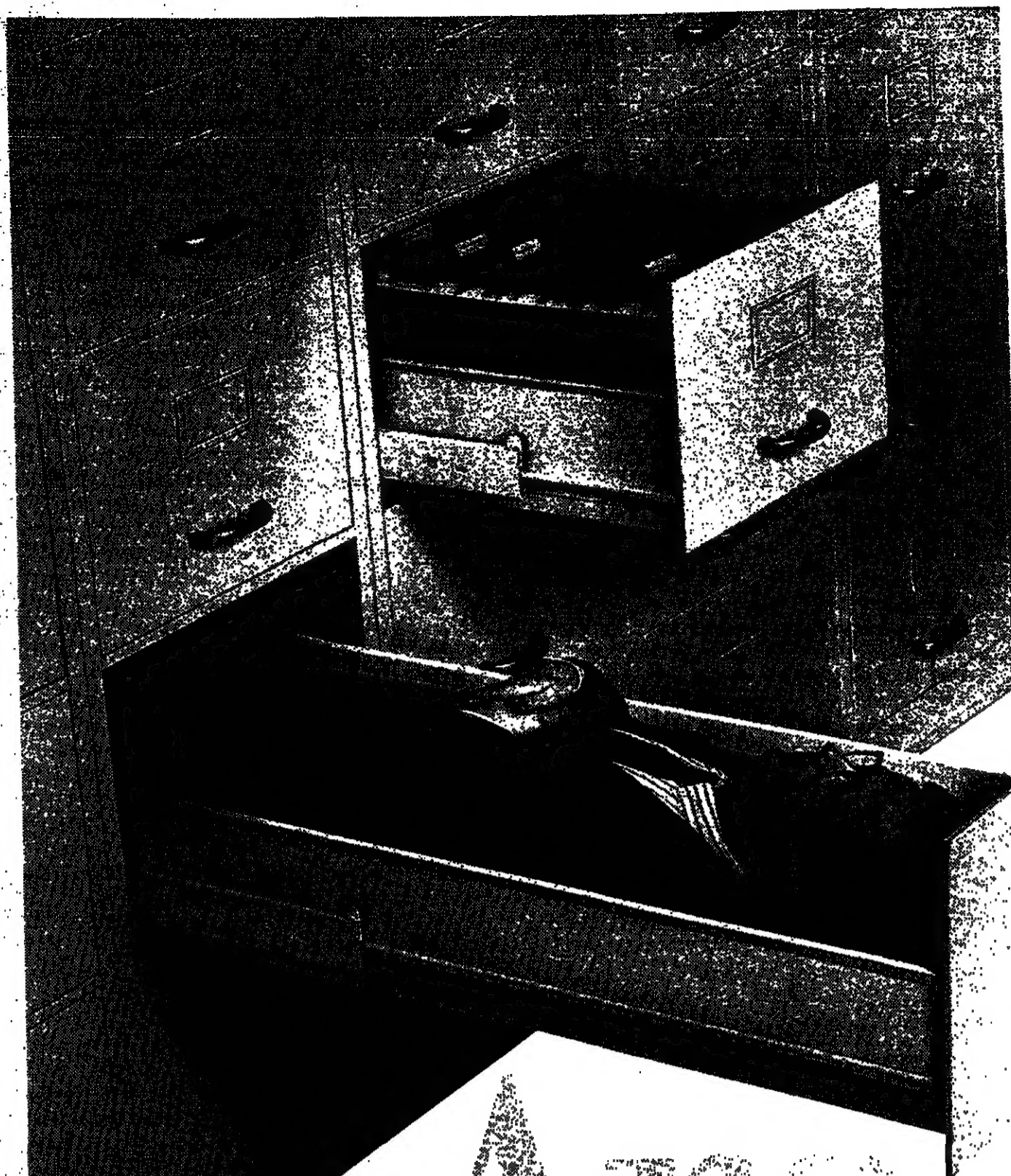
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Are you working yourself to death?

First the bad news.

In the 1960s an American study into stress at work established that men under 45 who worked 48 hours a week, stood twice as much chance of dying from a heart attack as those who worked a slightly more civilised 40 hours.

Well, today people work far longer hours than that.

Here in Britain, we work longer than anywhere else in the EC. Regularly putting in fifty, sixty, even seventy hours a week.

And it's not as if our standard of living is anything to write home about, especially

when you compare us to countries like France or Germany.

No wonder there are now more than 40,000 qualified stress counsellors in Britain.

In fact, over 90 million working days are lost every year as a direct result of stress!

And there's worse:

As well as being implicated in heart disease, stress is also linked with conditions like cancer, stroke and mental illness.

The irony is that the unhealthy hours so many of us work these days, mean we spend less and less time with the very people we're trying to provide a

better life for. Our families.

So ask yourself this. What happens to your family if, God forbid, you suffer a serious illness and die?

Then again, what happens if you have a serious illness and don't die?

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It's no good saying that "it couldn't happen to me".

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through ill health at some time in your working life, are one in five.

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So imagine how much more relaxed you'll feel after a proper chat with us.

If you want to reduce the effects of stress, by all means take more exercise, take more time off, take your other half out more and take your career a little less seriously.

But whatever you take, make sure you take our phone number.

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Police win power to ban peaceful protests on roads

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

PEACEFUL protests on public highways can be banned by the police, the High Court ruled yesterday in a test case of new public order legislation. The ruling gives Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, crucial legal backing for the new criminal offence of "trespassory assembly", which is aimed at curbing protests on public roads.

Margaret Jones, a university lecturer, and Richard Lloyd, a student, were the first people charged with the new offence after they were arrested during a peaceful demonstration at Stonehenge. They took part in the demonstration even though an order was in force banning assemblies of 20 people or more.

They were found guilty at Salisbury Magistrates' Court and Dr Jones was given a conditional discharge and ordered to pay £100 costs. Mr Lloyd was ordered to pay £300 in fines and costs. The convictions were overturned on appeal to Salisbury Crown

Court, where it was ruled that there was no case to answer. Lord Justice McCowan, sitting with Mr Justice Collins, ruled that the Crown Court had got the law wrong and ordered a rehearing. Lord Justice McCowan said the Crown Court appeared to accept "that any assembly on the highway is lawful as long as it is peaceful and non-obstructive of the highway; in my judgment, however, that is mistaken".

He said it left out of account the fact that an order had been made to prohibit the holding of a demonstration for the right of access to Stonehenge within a four-mile radius between May 29 and June 1.

A demonstration had taken place on the grass verge of the A344, beside the perimeter fence. Lord Justice McCowan said: "The prosecution need prove no more than that the assembly consisted of 20 or more persons and that the particular person accused was taking part in that assembly, knowing it to be prohibited by an order under section 14A of the 1986 Public Order Act."

Mr Justice Collins agreed, adding: "The holding of a meeting, a demonstration or a vigil on the highway, however peaceable, has nothing to do with the right of passage. Such activities may, if they do not cause an obstruction, be tolerated but there is no legal right to pursue them."

Dr Jones, a lecturer at Bristol University, said the ruling was bad for democracy. "The judgment denies any right to assemble freely in a public place if the police seek and obtain a banning order from a local authority under the new Act on the grounds that there is danger of disruption to the life of the community. Peaceful protests of all kinds, whether to prevent the closing of a hospital wing or in a trade union context, are all affected."

Although the court said the case should go back to the Crown Court for a rehearing before a differently constituted bench, the CPS will be considering whether to continue with the prosecution, now that it has established the legality of the new police powers to curb public demonstrations, even when peaceful and posing no threat to public order.

John Wadham, director of the civil rights pressure group Liberty, said: "A peaceful, non-obstructive gathering is a reasonable use of a public highway. To say that it is a form of trespass seems extraordinary. It must be one of the more bizarre consequences of the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act."

The Crown Prosecution Service said: "We took the case to court to clarify the law and they have ruled the police were right to take action and we were right to prosecute."



Margaret Jones and Richard Lloyd were arrested during a peaceful demonstration at Stonehenge



Challengers to a men-only tradition over a 16th-century battle: Ashley Simpson, left, and Mandy Graham

Equality advances at a slow trot after peace talks on Hawick ride

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE women of Hawick appear to be on the verge of claiming a small victory for sexual equality and ending an eight-month feud that has divided the Scottish Borders town.

Three hours of secret talks between traditionalists and reformers are believed to have broken a long feud over the town's annual riding cavalcade. A compromise would allow women to take part in three of the 16 rides that dominate town life during May and early June. The rides commemorate the 1514 Battle of Horseshoe, when a group of local boys ambushed the English and bore their pennant back to town.

The rides offered to do not include any of the seven official ceremonial ones, and the compromise is still to be ratified by the traditionalist, all-male, Common Riding Committee. Neither side was prepared to comment.

Of the 13 Border towns that have Common Riding, Hawick is the only one that continues to exclude women. The current dispute began last June when Mandy Graham, 21, and Ashley Simpson, 23, attempted to join 300 horsemen at the ceremony.

Ugly scenes ensued, which resulted in John Rodkin, a Hawick Provost, being fined £500 for breach of the peace. Jedburgh Sheriff Court heard that he spat at the women who attempted to join the men and called them "slags".

The Common Riding Committee organised a referendum on whether to lift the ban on women. It was boycotted by the Lady Riders Association as one-sided, and as a result just 23 per cent of the 12,000 popular vote. They favoured the status quo.

A ban on women at the event has not been lifted since 1932. The issue has disrupted the town to the extent that people have felt intimidated on both sides.

The secret talks — the first between polarised men and women — were held under a threat from Scottish Borders Council to withdraw public funding of £20,000 for the Common Riding unless a compromise were reached. The Lady Riders Association had asked to take part in one official and two unofficial rides.

Yesterday they discreetly refused to indulge in any triumphalism, and instead stuck to the party line, claim-

ing that no deal had yet been completed. A joint statement issued by representatives of the Common Riding Committee, the association, and Hawick Provost Council said: "Valuable progress has been made and a further endorsing statement will be forthcoming in the very near future."

More details are expected to emerge officially next week after the new Hawick Court — the man who ceremonially invites the horsemen to ride — has been announced at the town's Burns Supper tomorrow.

Whatever the outcome, members of the Common Riding Committee face accusations of sex discrimination in court next month. The women are suing them with the backing of the Equal Opportunities Commission.

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ing that no deal had yet been completed. A joint statement issued by representatives of the Common Riding Committee, the association, and Hawick Provost Council said: "Valuable progress has been made and a further endorsing statement will be forthcoming in the very near future."

Fruit gets smaller to tempt children

BY ROBIN YOUNG

SUPERMARKETS are promoting the sale of bite-sized baby fruits as part of a drive to persuade children to eat healthier food. Baby bananas have been on sale in Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury and Waitrose for some time. Now Tesco has introduced baby apples and baby oranges.

"We are making food more interesting for children to eat," said Peter Durose, the Tesco produce buyer.

Promotions include: Asda: chicken breast fillets £5.99 for six (879g), pork joints and steaks £3.99 kg, parsnips 89p for 1.25kg, red/green seedless grapes 99p a lb. Budgens: whole chicken £3.09 for 1.5kg, Lincolnshire pork sausages 99p for 454g, pork chops £4.99kg. Co-op (CVS): part-boned chicken breasts £2.49 for 600g, Mr Lazenby's Butcher's Choice sausages £1.79 for 454g, frozen garden peas £1.49 for 1.81kg, Devonshire New Zealand lamb legs £12.49 for two, shoulders £6.49 for two. Harrods: Parma ham £3.79 for 100g, smoked lamb £2.49 for 100g, Vienna sausages 99p for 100g. Iceland: chicken fingers £1.79 for 20, boneless pork shoulder £3.28 a kg, low-fat breaded cod fillets £1.99 for 375g, cod fillets £1.99 for 680g.

Kwik Save: Linda McCartney sausages 79p for eight, Quaker Oats 75p for 750g, Typhoon tea bags £1.95 for 160, Harrods Chicken Soup 39p for 340g, Marks & Spencer: the pork fillet in mustard sauce £3.49 for 300g, the wholemeal bread 52p for 400g, low-fat carrot and coriander soup 99p for 450g. Morrisons: beef silveride £1.99 a lb, boneless pork shoulder £1.19 a lb, pork steak £1.50 a lb, cod fillet £1.79 lb, large oranges 69p for five. Sainsbury: boneless leg of pork £3.49 kg, salmon en croûte £1.99 for 400g, carrots 79p a lb, baby tomatoes 99p a lb, Red's pears 39p a lb, white seedless grapes 99p a lb. Sainsbury: haggis 99p for 454g, pork sausages 99p for 454g, fillet steak £13.88 a kg, white potatoes 89p for 5kg, white seedless grapes 99p a lb, confetti peas 69p a kg. Sainsbury: beef sirloin/silveride/top rump with added basting fat £5.02 a kg, mangosteen £1.09 for 200g, red potatoes 79p for 2.5kg, mixed peppers 79p for three, celery 99p a bunch, Royal Gala apples 44p a lb, loose pears £1.19 a lb, Tesco: beef brisket £3.79 a kg, lamb half-leg £5.89 a kg, pork loin steaks £4.39 a kg, onions 18p a lb, white potatoes 49p for 2.5kg, closed cup mushrooms 99p a lb, apricots 79p a lb. Waitrose: free-range chickens £2.99 kg, farmhouse duckling £2.79 a kg, sliced pork £1.99 for 312g, Desiree potatoes 79p for 2.5kg, apricots 99p a lb.

Lecturers' union votes for industrial action

BY DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

LECTURERS at "old" universities have voted to disrupt admissions and examinations this term despite an increased pay offer from vice-chancellors. Open days for prospective students, as well as tests towards final examinations, could fall foul of industrial action by the Association of University Teachers.

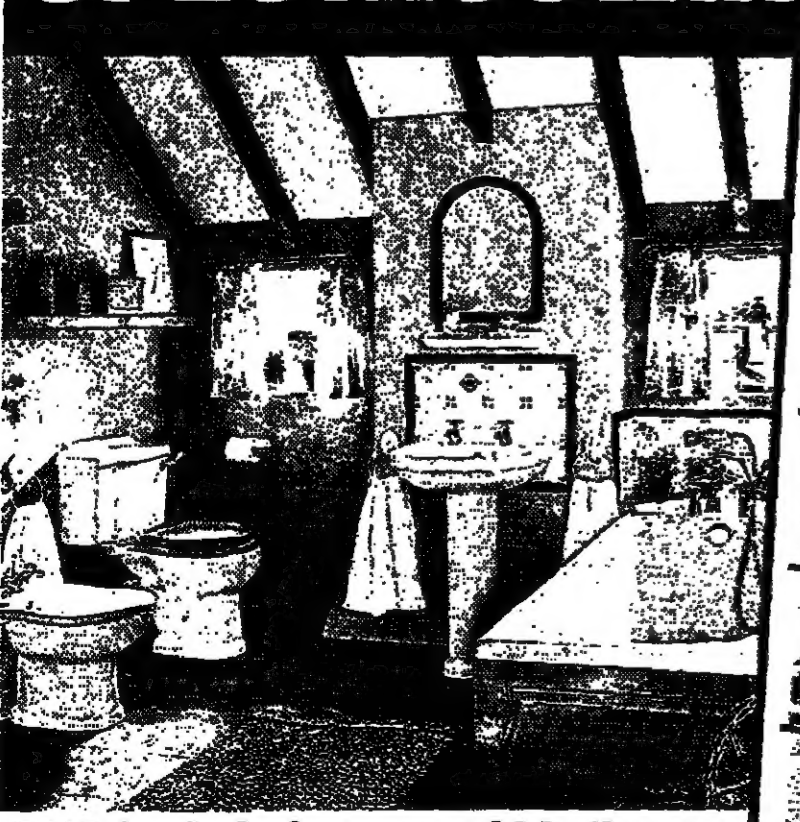
However, the seven other university unions, including lecturers at former polytechnics, are likely to accept the latest pay offer. The Universi-

ties and Colleges Employers Association has almost doubled its original offer to 2.9 per cent. The 1.5 per cent offer led to a one-day university strike in November.

AUT members backed further industrial action by three to one, it was announced at the union's annual council meeting yesterday. The union wants vice-chancellors to support its case for an independent pay review body, in line with teachers, as part of the pay settlement.

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Cold sores linked with greater risk of Alzheimer's

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

COLD SORES, the common but painful affliction of the face and lips, may be a cause of Alzheimer's disease, scientists believe. The discovery that some people with traces of the cold sore virus in their brains are at much greater risk of the dementing illness could point to a way of preventing it.

Studies at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology have shown that the herpes simplex virus, which lurks in the skin, migrates into the brain where it may cause damage later in life. Whether it does so appears to depend on the presence in the brain of a protein known as ApoE e-4, found in up to 30 per cent of the population. Analysing samples of brain tissue, scientists in the molecular neurobiology laboratory found that those with both the virus and the protein in their brains were almost 17 times more likely to have suffered from Alzheimer's.

Those who had just the virus or just the protein present in their brains were not at increased risk.

Professor Ruth Itzhaki, who led the study published in the *Lancet*, said: "The finding is alarming in a way, but does offer the possibility of preventing or slowing down the disease. If one could nip the infection in the bud, one could limit the damage."

Almost everyone is infected

An attempt to eradicate HIV by using a combination of drugs early in the infection may be working. After a year of treatment, no trace of the virus could be found in the blood or semen of 20 HIV-positive men. But traces in the lymph glands meant it was too soon to stop the drugs. The results were reported by Dr David Ho, of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Centre in New York, who is treating the men with AZT, 3TC and one of the new drugs known as protease inhibitors.

with the herpes simplex virus, which is transmitted by kissing. In infancy, usually it causes a sore and then works its way into the nerves of the face, where it remains dormant. However, in 20 per cent to 40 per cent of the population it can reactivate, causing repeated skin eruptions.

Professor Itzhaki said: "Over the course of your life the virus migrates to the brain as the immune system declines. Most people have it in their brains, but for most it doesn't do any harm."

The Manchester researchers believe that once the herpes virus reaches the brain it may reactivate intermittently. The kind of protein present may determine how much

damage is done during these periods of reactivation or how well the brain recovers.

The virus had previously been suggested as a risk factor for Alzheimer's because it can cause a very rare brain infection, herpes encephalitis, but until now its presence in the brain could not be detected.

The link between ApoE e-4 and Alzheimer's was established two years ago, but scientists knew that other factors must be involved. Professor Itzhaki said: "Neither the virus nor the protein is a risk factor on its own. But when you have a combination of the two there is a very strong correlation."

If the findings are confirmed, treatment with agents limiting the activity of the cold sore virus could slow the onset of Alzheimer's. Professor Itzhaki said: "People carrying the ApoE e-4 protein could be identified by a blood test. There is the possibility in the future of immunisation against the virus."



Gas clouds in the Lagoon Nebula, captured by the Hubble space telescope

Astronomers see birth of star, 5,000 light-years away

By NIGEL HAWKES

ASTRONOMERS have discovered stars being born 5,000 light-years away, at the centre of the Lagoon Nebula. A British telescope in Hawaii has shown a region full of intense radiation being emitted by carbon monoxide gas, as stars are formed from clouds of dust and hot gas.

The Hubble space telescope has shown gas swirling around the region to form shapes like tornadoes. These "twisters" are caused by large temperature differences between the hot surface and cold interior of the gas clouds, which produce strong shear forces that draw the gas into funnels.

Professor Glenn White, of Queen Mary and Westfield College in east London, working with Nick Tothill, also of Queen Mary and Westfield, and colleagues from Canada, Sweden and Germany, found the strong carbon monoxide emission using the James Clerk Maxwell telescope in Hawaii. The team pinpointed an intense bright spot which they believe is the site where

star formation is taking place. This occurs inside a dense cloud of gas which is more than 30 times the mass of the Sun, and about one light-year across.

Carbon monoxide was first discovered in space 27 years ago and it can be detected by observatories across the world. But the observation of the bright carbon monoxide emission was a surprise for the research team.

"Stars are created from clouds of hydrogen, the most plentiful material in the universe," Professor White said. "The trouble is that it's invisible. We can only see it by watching its effect on other materials — in this case, carbon monoxide."

"Here we are seeing the carbon monoxide molecules emitting radiation as a newly formed star radiates energy, illuminating the cloud around it. We know it is a new star because, if it had been there a long time, the radiation would have blown away the cloud and we wouldn't see it," he said.

Blood clots cure cancer in mice

CANCERS in mice have been cured in a process that aims to starve tumours of blood, (writes Nigel Hawkes). Using a substance to coagulate the blood in the tumour, but not in the rest of the body, an American team has managed to destroy tumours completely in more than a third of the mice tested.

The blood flowing through the tumours clotting within half an hour of the treatment, blocking them completely. Deprived of blood, the tumours began to die, just as heart muscle does in a heart attack.

Within 24 hours, the tumours had begun to break up, and within 72 hours they had collapsed. The treatment appears to have no side-effects: the mice lost no weight and remained fit and active.

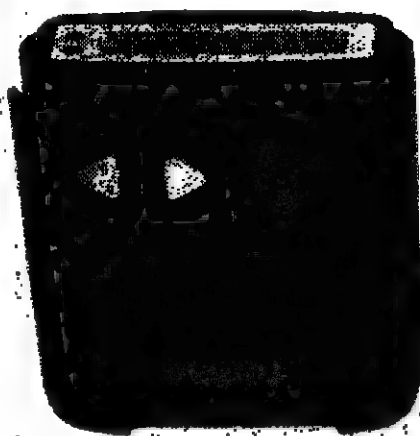
The clotting agent is attached to an antibody which seeks out a protein on the surface of the cells lining the walls of the blood vessels

feeding the tumour. Such proteins are believed to exist in human tumours, suggesting that the method may one day be useful in cancer therapy.

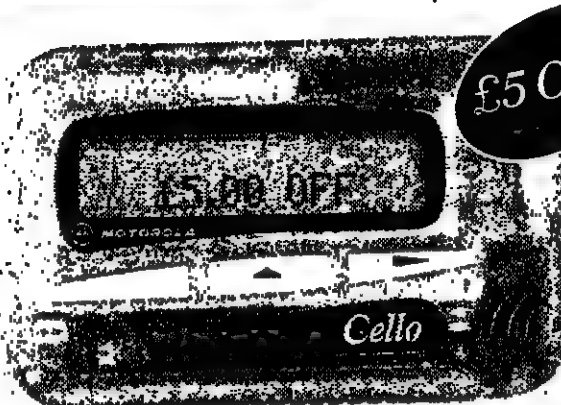
Dr Philip Thorpe, of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre, said the process was less toxic than conventional cancer drugs, yet provided "highly effective therapy".

There are several possible advantages for the treatment. Getting drugs to tumours is difficult, because they are not directly accessible to the blood vessels which carry the drugs. The treatment avoids the problem, because it attacks the cancer cells indirectly. And because the cells on the blood vessel lining are normal cells, they may be less likely to acquire mutations that make them resistant to the treatment. The hope is that the method could be used eventually to treat lung, breast, prostate, pancreatic and brain tumours.

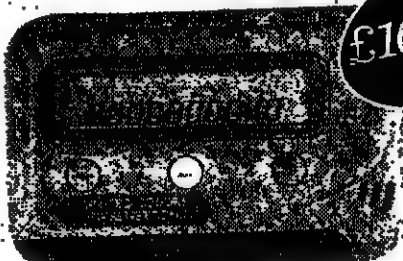
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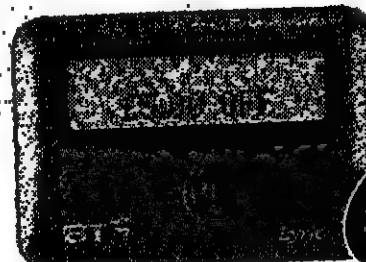
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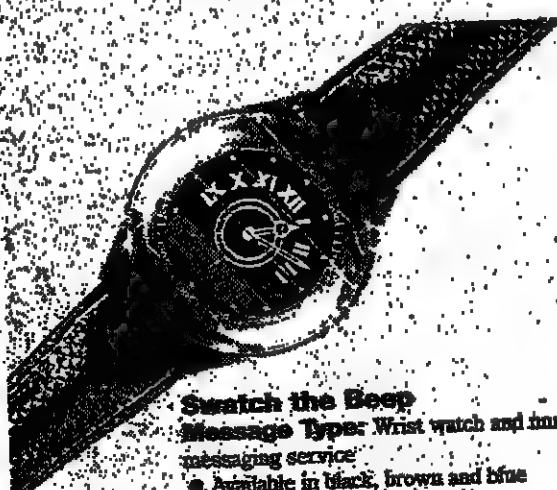
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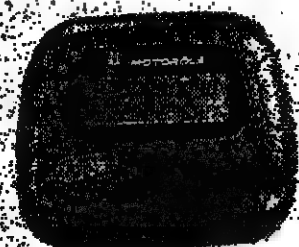
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SPER

Civil Service chief steered yacht plan through Cabinet

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

WHEN Michael Heseltine chaired the Wednesday morning meeting of the Cabinet sub-committee on presentation, he was the guardian of a state secret.

As officials and party aides ran through the day's agenda, the subject of *Britannia* and the likelihood of a government statement on the decision to replace her was not even mentioned. Yet on Tuesday evening a hastily called meeting at 10 Downing Street for senior Ministers had taken the decision to commission a new royal yacht.

The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister and only a few senior ministers were invited: Mr Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, and Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary. On Monday they had each been circulated with a ten-page paper written by Sir Robin Butler, the Cabinet Secretary, setting out his view on the best option for a new royal yacht.

The country's most senior civil servant set out the tradition of the royal yacht, and how it had served the monarchy and the nation. He believed that it was a national symbol for Britain overseas and that at home it was largely

a cherished institution. If ministers chose to replace her, he set out how a new yacht could be adapted to the needs of a modern monarchy and for the Government's commercial objectives overseas.

But he was insistent that only a publicly funded yacht was appropriate as it touched the monarch's dignity so closely. Advice to ministers is confidential but a government source said yesterday that much of Sir Robin's views formed Mr Portillo's text in his announcement to MPs.

It was clearly powerful reading and had considerable impact on the Mr Clarke. Senior ministers had until then regarded him as a stumbling block to a replacement. But Mr Clarke's antipathy was more to do with timing and priorities than hostility to the project. At a time of the Budget and the public spending round he could not have agreed to such a project or expected his fellow ministers to welcome it.

The Chancellor met Mr Portillo on Monday to work out a deal on funding. Mr Portillo was delighted by Mr Clarke's conversion. There would be a feasibility study, the running costs would be half those of *Britannia*, and payment would be made over some years. The aim would be for the new royal yacht to be

ready to celebrate the Queen's golden jubilee in 2002.

A Treasury source said yesterday: "It was all about timing really. The money was never a particularly big deal. But the Chancellor is now persuaded it is a good thing, for the monarchy and as a boost to Britain's trade and exports."

When Mr Major summoned the ad hoc group of ministers to make the final political decision on *Britannia*, the matter had been settled. Ministers had to rubber-stamp the deal and approve an announcement.

No wonder that Mr Portillo was in good form on Tuesday night. He was addressing a dinner for Romney constituency association, seat of Michael Colvin, chairman of the Defence Select Committee and a campaigner for a new royal yacht. But Mr Portillo said nothing of *Britannia*.

The Queen's private office was told about the decision by telephone on Wednesday morning. The usual Tuesday audience between the Prime Minister and the Queen did not take place this week.

Buckingham Palace was kept informed of the developments, but played no part in the discussions. The Palace view was that any decision on a new royal yacht was purely a matter for the Government.



Two faces of the Tory campaign: the demon eyes are to be used again, possibly in a TV broadcast like the one that developed the Labour tears theme

Tories to revive 'demon eyes' campaign

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

THE Tory demon eyes campaign against Tony Blair, which was censured by the Advertising Standards Authority, is to be used again in the run-up to the general election.

Brian Mawhinney, the Tory Party chairman, has been persuaded to resurrect the image — superimposed red glowing eyes on a photograph of Mr Blair — because it has been one of the most successful in the party's electioneering history.

The Tories may use the red eyes as a moving image in a party political broadcast on television or in a nationwide poster campaign, or newspaper advertisements. The Advertising Standards Authority, which condemned the demon eyes advertisement last year, has no jurisdiction over party political broadcasts.

The disclosure that the demon eyes

are back on the Tories' agenda comes only days after their latest party political broadcast. The pioneering commercial has been criticised as "negative campaigning". The 4-minute film featured only one scene, with a woman sitting in a darkened room listening to the BBC news about life under a Labour government: rising unemployment; hyperinflation; left-wing militancy; and John Prescott at the head of a rebel movement. At the end a blood-red tear dripped from the woman's eye.

John Major saw the film in his Downing Street flat only 24 hours before transmission and overruled some Tory strategists who feared that it would create the wrong impression by conceding that Mr Blair could form a government.

Tory Party chiefs were unrepentant about the tone and may film the same middle-aged woman in a hospital bed to try to illustrate the collapse of the

health service under a Labour government. Tuesday's advert was created by Jeremy Sinclair, a partner at M C Saatchi. He was one of the original creative forces at Saatchi & Saatchi with Maurice and Charles in the 1970s. He has worked on virtually every Tory campaign since 1979.

Brian Mawhinney is prepared to ride out the inevitable criticism for his decision to recreate the demon eyes campaign. But he is determined to press ahead after private research showed that it had a bigger impact than Saatchi & Saatchi's Labour isn't Working poster from 1979.

The advertising industry's Campaign newspaper voted the demon eyes the campaign of the year. A large copy of the picture has pride of place on the wall of Mr Mawhinney's office at party headquarters. The advertisement was used only once, in three Sunday newspapers, and cost £125,000 but generated free publicity estimated

to have been worth £5 million. The idea for it came from Sir Tim Bell and the recently ennobled Maurice Saatchi and Peter Gummer.

One senior Tory official said last night: "We have not decided on the implementation, but one thing is sure: we will use the demon eyes again." One possibility is that the demon eyes will be used on their own, rather than superimposed on Mr Blair's face. "But it will be equally clear who we are aiming at," the official said.

The Advertising Standards Authority ruled last August that the campaign had broken its code of practice by portraying the Labour leader as "sinister and dishonest". The authority said that it should not be repeated. But yesterday a spokesman said: "It was the decision to superimpose the eyes on Tony Blair which made it in breach of the code. They are not prevented from using a similar technique in a different way."

Clarke's EMU option is all but dead and buried

Kenneth Clarke was last night holding on just by his finger tips to his wait-and-see policy on a single currency. Yesterday's 90-minute Cabinet discussion may not have formally closed off the option, but it has done so in practice. As Malcolm Rifkind said afterwards, "it is unlikely that circumstances will lead to us wishing to join a single currency in January 1999". That was underlined by the later ministerial comments that it was "very unlikely" that the legislation required for entry would be introduced in the first session of the next Parliament. This shift recognises the political realities in the Cabinet and the Tory parliamentary party, which Mr Clarke made the best of yesterday.

There has never, of course, been any serious possibility that a re-elected Major Government would enter a single currency in the first wave or at any stage in the next Parliament. The sceptics have wanted a firm declaration that this will not happen and many will make such a commitment in their constituency election addresses. That has been resisted on two grounds.

The first, emphasised by John Major and Mr Rifkind, is that such a decision now would undermine any remaining British influence on the shape of EMU. In theory, that still stands. The second, the implicit position of the Clarke

camp, is that keeping open the option ensures that the coming election will not be fought with the two main parties for or against a single currency and that the Tories' supporters will not be misled in the next Parliament by a manifesto commitment to joining.

The statement allows Mr Clarke to claim that entry is still possible in 1999, even though Mr Major and Mr Rifkind gave the opposite impression. The language is all conditional: the word "if" is used three times. Nonetheless, it is a clear victory for the Cabinet sceptics. "Upon the information available to us at present, we reached the conclusion that it was very unlikely, though not impossible, that countries' performance against the criteria would be sufficiently clear and stable for it to proceed safely on January 1, 1999. On that basis there is a strong argument for delay by the EU as a whole. If it did proceed without reliable convergence, we would not, of course, be part of it. If the start date were delayed, we would, of course, retain the option to join at a later date, whether that was in the first wave or not."

The Cabinet decision pleased Tory backbench sceptics — even those who claim that it does not go far

enough. The electoral impact is less certain: "very unlikely" is hardly as resounding an appeal on the hustings as "never" and Cabinet divisions remain, doubtless to be exposed again during the campaign.

Attention will now turn to Labour. Tony Blair has wanted both to promise that a Labour government would establish a "better" relationship with the EU and to avoid being portrayed as a soft touch for Brussels. Many senior Labour politicians would like Mr Blair to match the Cabinet's shift. Robin Cook makes no secret of his belief that Britain should not enter in the first wave, even though we should join later if monetary union proves to be successful.

Gordon Brown, however, wants to keep open the first wave option and that was his condition for agreeing last autumn to the promise of a referendum. His allies were insistent last night that there would be no change in Labour policy. Mr Brown is in a stronger position than Mr Clarke. But if Labour wins the election, it is still unlikely that Britain would join in a first wave, not least because a Blair government would have so much else to do. The door may be virtually closed, but it has not yet been locked and bolted.

PETER RIDDELL

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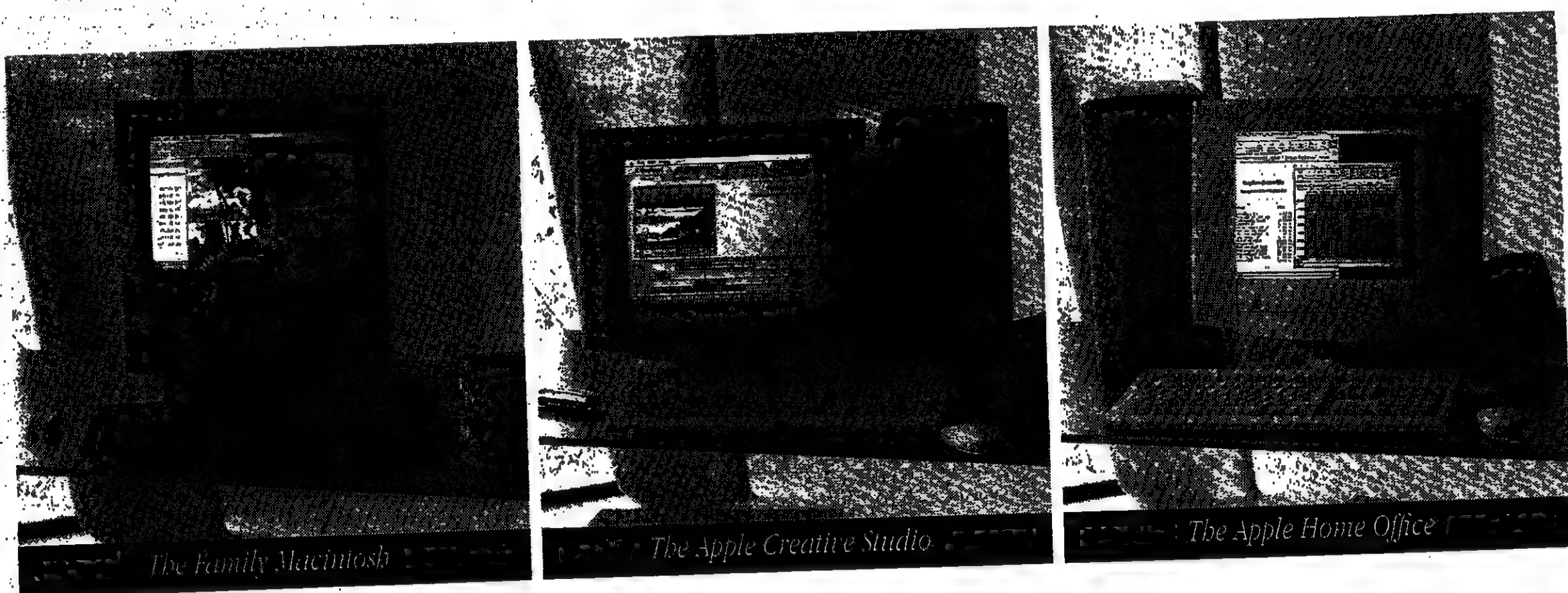
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Pensioner power and memory of Weimar hyper-inflation spell trouble for Chancellor

Ageing Germans seek referendum in anti-euro fight

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY'S increasingly militant 17 million old age pensioners are emerging as the country's most powerful opponents to the introduction of the euro and scrapping of the mark.

The chairman of the so-called Grey Panthers, Trade Unruh, said yesterday: "Old people who have lost their money several times because of currency reforms are overwhelmingly against the euro."

Similar opinions are being expressed by other lobbyists for the over-60s and it is becoming clear that the euro debate in Germany runs not on party lines — the mainstream parties are broadly in favour of EMU, though each contains a number of sceptics — but across the generations.

Banks, responding to hundreds of daily nervous inquiries from pensioners, have set up special advisory units for the over-60s. The chief concerns are about the future of savings, the vulnerability of maturing life insurance policies and the possibility of inflation eating their pensions.

Frau Unruh's Grey Panthers insist that old people should support the euro only if the Government presses for uniform European taxes. Roswitha Verhulsdunk, head of the Federal Pensioners Association, says that at every public meeting on the euro she is flooded by anxious questions by pensioners. "People are terrified because they simply cannot imagine what will happen to their money," Joachim Faustmann, at the Association of War Victims, has a similar experience: "With all the current savings and cuts in the welfare state, it is hardly surprising that the euro is being rejected."

The fear of inflation sits deep in the older generation. The very oldest — there are 350,000 Germans over 90 — can remember losing their savings in the hyper-inflation of 1923 (when wheelbarrows were needed to carry the money for a loaf of bread); in the economic depression of 1929-1933; and the currency reform of 1948.

The outstanding lawyer Rudolf Wassermann — now 71 and retired from the High Court bench — is demanding a referendum. "It is unbelievable that such a revolutionary act could be carried through without consulting the people... the politicians are afraid of the people."

A referendum is regarded as constitutionally difficult and has been ruled out by the Chancellor. Professor Wassermann, however, believes that Article 20 of the Constitution opens the possibility of a popular ballot on the issue.

A recent opinion survey by the Forsa Institute showed that 73 per cent of Germans favour such a move. Threequarters do not believe political pledges that the euro will be as strong as the mark. The over-60s — although some have memories of the unhap-

py referendums of the Weimar Republic — strongly favour the referendum option.

The balance of power is shifting quickly towards the over-60s. The young generation up to the age of 20 currently comprises 18 million, only slightly outnumbering the 17.5 million over-60s. But by 2000 their proportion is expected to be 13 million youngsters with 19.3 million over-60s. The spending power of over-60s is stronger than any other generation: average after-tax income for 60/69-year-olds is £530 and for the over-70s £610 a month.

That could translate into serious trouble for Herr Kohl's Christian Democrats in the October 1998 elections and will certainly force the Government to be strict in its choice of who should be excluded from the European monetary union.

Even retired bankers — such as 90-year-old Johannes Zahn, the former chairman of the German stock exchange — are coming out publicly against the euro. "The idea that a common currency can be used to even out economic differences in Europe will prove to be a profound mistake," said Professor Zahn, whose opinion still carries weight among younger bankers. Herr Kohl will try to reassure the veteran sceptics in a speech next week.

Leading article and Letters, page 23



Helmut Kohl at a meeting in Bonn yesterday to discuss sweeping tax reforms. The changes could backfire amid growing opposition to a single currency

Rifkind argues for nation state

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE nation state has served Britain well as a protector of its freedom. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, said yesterday. In Britain there was still pride in its achievements, even if the notion made

people uncomfortable in other parts of Europe.

In a speech to the French Chamber of Commerce in London, Mr Rifkind said Britain's belief in the role of the nation state should not come as any surprise. "It is not a hangover from a more nationalist era, but a tradition rooted

in the experience and culture of the British people. It will not go away."

He said there could not be a return to the Europe of the 1930s, where the balance of power determined alliances and caused wars. But the alternative was not a supra-national federal Europe.

Taxation reform could prove pitfall for Kohl

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE German Government unveiled an overhaul of the country's confusing tax system yesterday in what it said would be "the reform of the century". Critics, however, said the reform was too cautious, favoured the rich and was unlikely to survive intact after going through the lengthy procedure of parliamentary approval.

The plan is to cut the top income tax rate from 53 per cent to 39 per cent, but at the same time wipe out the many tax breaks and loopholes exploited by higher-income earners. Taxes on companies and company profits are also to come down. At the bottom end of the income scale, the lowest rate is to fall to 20 per cent from its present 25.9 per cent.

Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, who is being criticised by politicians even in the governing Christian Democratic Union for setting too modest targets, said the reform was a successful step towards the modernisation of Germany.

Günter Rempp, the Economics Minister, said: "It would increase the attractiveness of Germany as a place for investment, spur growth and help to ease the unemployment, which stands at 4.1 million."

But the tax changes, part of Helmut Kohl's attempt to project his Government as reformers, contains many hidden pitfalls for Bonn and may backfire on the Chancellor. All tax reforms create winners and losers, but in the case of yesterday's package losers seem to be in the majority.

The shortfall in tax revenue may well have to be met by raising value added tax by 1 or 2 percentage points and by taxing some pensions and life insurance policies. That will alienate many voters. "Raising VAT in order to finance an income tax cut is absolutely the wrong way to go," said Carl-Heinz Dacke, chairman of the Association of Taxpayers. "The Government will be taking out of one pocket what it puts in the other."

One goal of the tax reform — to simplify procedures — seems to have been abandoned. And the discarding of tax write-offs and loopholes has already triggered a fierce scramble among lobbyists to ensure that the plan is changed before it is ratified.

Herr Waigel's Christian Social Union, for example, is upset about dropping tax concessions for car-driving commuters; many rural voters in Bavaria drive a long way to work.

The fundamental flaw, however, is that the tax reform has been oversold. Praised as a cure-all for the sluggish economy, it comes into effect only in 1999, some months after the general election. That raises the question why the Government lacks the political will to push it through earlier. "So many hopes have been pinned to the reform that, if it fails, you can kiss this Government goodbye," Thomas Mayer, chief economist at Goldman Sachs in Frankfurt, said.

Serbian police fight to keep control of media for Milosevic

By TOM WALKER IN KRAGUEVAC AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

SERB police beat protesters in this Serbian town yesterday in a confrontation over control of the local media, and municipal leaders gave a warning that violence could spiral.

Hundreds of police had barricaded themselves inside the radio and television station in the town, 60 miles south of Belgrade, to prevent a takeover by new city officials. Opponents of President Milosevic surrounded them, threatening to use force to enter, and formed a traffic blockade on the main road to Belgrade. About 60 riot policemen charged with batons, badly beating two protesters.

So unpopular is President Milosevic here that he did not contest the election won recently by the opposition.

In 1989 the Zastava industrial complex was producing

risk of violence. These factories have no future.

The Zastava complex is out of bounds to visitors, being in the hands of directors loyal to Mr Milosevic. The mayor, an engineer by training, was dismissed from the plant in 1994, along with others who appear in power in a bankrupt city hall. "It is a waste of time going there anyway," Mr Stevanovic says. "There's nothing happening and they have absolutely no answers."

About 15,000 demonstrators have been turning out each night to face the police. They copy the tactics so successful in Belgrade, throwing up a rioting wall of sound with whistles, hooters and pans. The local media have tried to stifle news of the protest but a court has ruled in favour of the municipality.

"It is quite ridiculous — the station is just 100 yards away, and no mention is ever made of the protests," says Vidoslav Stevanovic, a novelist and playwright returned from exile in Paris who hopes to begin independent broadcasts. "A free media is of the utmost importance. Every third family is starving and every second family has no means to live, and people should know that."

Kragujevac has a history of revolt, having been the breeding ground of an insurrection against the Turks in 1804. After a second uprising it became the capital of Serbia between 1818 and 1841, and home to the nation's first theatre and newspaper.

The few workers who now manage to find shift work earn about £40 a month. The majority, who are classified as being on leave, take home about £11.

Production at the car plant is down to about 5,000 vehicles a year. Work is often halted for want of engines — which come from the crippled Rakovica plant in Belgrade. The Government owes the arms factory £40 million. There is no ready solution to Kragujevac's problems.



220,000 Yugo and Zastava cars a year, and multimillion-pound consignments of anti-aircraft guns and small arms were being shipped to clients at home and abroad, including the United States. The complex used to provide employment for almost a quarter of the town's 200,000 population.

Today there are just a few hundred people working on the production line and Mr Milosevic is detested by blue-collar workers. In November's elections, the Zajedno opposition coalition was voted into power. In contrast to his reaction to electoral defeat in many other cities and towns, Mr Milosevic has allowed the Opposition to take power. However, his supporters have retained control of the local media.

Aleksandar Radosavljevic, a local opposition leader, said yesterday that negotiations on the handing over of the stations had failed and protests would continue. "Obviously, they don't want any agreement and are determined to keep control of the media," Mr Radosavljevic said.

"Tension is far higher than in Belgrade," says Veroljub Stevanovic, the new Mayor. "The unemployed population is high, and if our demonstrations get bigger there is a large

Thousands protest over EMU

ATHENS: Thousands of workers took the day off and marched in protest over the Greek Government's belt-tightening policy and plans to join the European single currency within five years (John Carr writes).

Meanwhile, merchant seamen ended a ten-day strike. A majority of the Panhellenic Maritime Federation, the country's biggest marine union, took the decision after the Government moderated a plan to make seamen pay tax.

Panda poachers

BEIJING: Three people who sold two panda skins were jailed for 15 years by a southern China court. The maximum penalty for killing or selling the fur of the threatened species is death. (Reuters)

The last post

HONG KONG: Stamps bearing the Queen's image go on sale in Hong Kong tomorrow for the last time. Collectors are in a frenzy over the "last day covers" and the replacement issue, on sale from Sunday.

Algerian plea

ROME: Algeria's main secular opposition leader, Hocine Ait Ahmed, urged President Clinton to appoint a mediator to help to end violence which has killed 160 people in two weeks of bombings. (Reuters)

Vote for change

ROME: Parliament has agreed moves to change Italy's constitution to try to obtain a stable government and more efficient legislature. Most parties back a federal structure and fewer MPs. (Reuters)

Off the airwaves

BRUSSELS: A Belgian teenage aircraft fanatic who used a pirate radio to issue instructions to landing pilots has been arrested. Pilots had been advised to double-check instructions. (AFP)

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FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

"As in all political trials, the outcome has already been settled with the authorities," M. Papon said, comparing himself to Captain Alfred



Papon: says he did not know about Holocaust

M Papon has denied the charges, saying he sacrificed a few Jews to save others. He has said he knew nothing about the Holocaust, never embraced Nazi ideology and was merely doing his job.



BY BEN MACINTYRE

M. Douste-Blazy announced the grants at the restaurant newly opened by Pierre Gagnaire, a master chef forced recently to declare

The grants will be dispensed by the National Council of Culinary Arts and the French Institute for Financing Cinema and Cultural Industries. To qualify, chefs must be under 35 and show exceptional culinary promise and prowess. A jury of five of France's greatest chefs will select the annual winners.

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

General Lebed, 46, the ambitious ex-soldier who was sacked by President Yeltsin last year, arrived in Manhattan this week after attending the American presidential inauguration in Washington. His sojourn, conducted as "a private citizen", may be compared to the contact-building trip Mr Yeltsin made to the United States in 1991, before he gained power.

He visited senior executives at Du Pont, the pharmaceuticals company, and on Wednesday met that most vivid of capitalist property developers, Donald Trump. Mr Trump, who rewarded his visitor with a glass apple souvenir, told a large posse of reporters that he had found General Lebed "terrific". It is not a word one often hears applied to the gruff Russian, but General Lebed has made an effort to appeal to the American people.

In a message for potential investors who have been wary about Russia, General Lebed said: "He who doesn't take risks, does not drink champagne." To illustrate his belief that it was time for Russia to find an improved system of government, he said: "There has got to be a time when you stop stepping on the same rake".

When the rising Boris Yeltsin was swimming through Manhattan in the early Nineties there were rumours of heavy drinking sessions — one dis-obliging report said that he treated America like "one long bar".

General Lebed has been more careful.

After this trip, he is certainly viewed as a more civilised figure by the

Gang warfare and the underworld have formed the backdrop to several musicals, from *Guns and Dolls* to *Bugsy Malone*. But in Italy the Mafia is no laughing matter. The authorities are engaged in a battle with Mafia bosses in an attempt to destroy the leadership and the network of

Roberta Torre, 34, a video director who moved from Milan to Palermo ten years ago, said she had lived with "illegality and degradation" in Sicily and it "had a vitality of its own." The musical, entitled *Tano - da morire (Tano - to die for)*, is based on a true story, Signora Torre said.

The plot revolves round a small-time Mafia boss, called Tano Guarrasi in the musical,

It is based on an incident at the height of the war at the end of the 1980s between the Corleone clan, then led by Salvatore "Totò" Riina, and other families.

In one scene gangsters eliminate one of their rivals in a bloody shootout to the strains of a jazz melody. In another, Mafia wives dance a samba, singing: "We are the slaves

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THIS INTEREST FREE

British staff sent home after sale of visas in Nigeria

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, AND LIN JENKINS

DETECTIVES are investigating a widespread corruption concerning the sale of British visas to Nigerians, Scotland Yard confirmed last night. British staff at the British High Commission in Lagos dealing with visas have been sent home after a team from the Metropolitan Police Organised Crime Group began inquiries in Nigeria last month. The team uncovered systematic fraud involving large sums of money, and as a result of the preliminary findings the Foreign Office recalled up to four of the 29 staff deployed in the country. All worked in the visa section. Scotland Yard said: "Officers of the Organised Crime Group have been asked to investigate alleged corruption involving the issuing of British visas in Nigeria." The team of four, under a superintendent, will be interviewing a number of people after its visit to the country on December 10. The Foreign Office said: "We can confirm that some members of staff have returned from Lagos to help the Metropolitan Police with their inquiries. We are not able to say more about the names or numbers of staff concerned while the investigation continues." It refused to discuss details. The investigation, however, is unprecedented in its scope and in the intense embarrassment it causes the Government. Britain played a leading role in persuading the rest of the Commonwealth to refuse visas to military personnel and other senior government officials as one of the sanctions put in place in 1995 because of the Nigerian military Government's refusal to accelerate a return to democracy. Suggestions that consular officials corruptly issued visas for Nigerians seeking to visit Britain not only undermine this policy, but will be used by Commonwealth countries opposed to any strengthening of the sanctions to level charges of hypocrisy against Britain. Nigeria is a country that has become notorious for corruption, bribery and brazen quasi-official attempts at extortion. Almost no business transaction is free from the taint of bribery. Thousands of businessmen and individuals in Britain have received letters proposing the laundering of profits from overcharging on government contract - only to find that, after paying an initial sum for administrative costs to a Nigerian address, no money is ever sent from Nigeria. The British Government has warned businessmen about such scams. The Foreign Office has also insisted that the visa ban is one of the most effective ways of putting pressure on General Sani Abacha, as families of his military cohorts often want to come to London for shopping and holidays. The Foreign Office has also denied that Nigerians connected with the military regime have been granted visas for Britain.



Jenima Khan, wife of Imran Khan, is embraced in Islamabad yesterday by a woman activist of her husband's party after she had addressed a women's rally in support of his campaign for the coming national elections

Chinese reject protest

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

CHINA yesterday rejected a British protest over proposed changes. Peking intends to make to Hong Kong laws on its new-found civil liberties, and complained that Britain was forcing its will on others. "We cannot accept the British protest," Shen Guofang, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, said referring to the "serious concern" Jeremy Hanley, a Foreign Office minister, had expressed on Wednesday after summoning Jiang Enzhu, the Chinese Ambassador. Mr Shen called the British action "totally unreasonable", adding that the so-called protest was unwelcome. He insisted that Hong Kong would be "China's internal affair" after Peking resumes control on June 30. Mr Hanley's protest was over China's plans to dilute the Bill of Rights and other related laws guaranteeing civil liberties in Hong Kong after the change of sovereignty.

Warning to Arafat

Jerusalem: Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, has drawn up a contingency plan should Yasser Arafat declare a Palestinian state which Israeli officials say involves the reoccupation of much of the West Bank (Christopher Walker writes). The existence of the plan was revealed by Mr Netanyahu in an Israeli television interview after President Arafat announced in Cairo on Wednesday that a declaration of the state would probably be made in the middle of next year. "The Palestinian state is not an Israeli issue; it is an Arab, international issue," Mr Arafat said. Mr Netanyahu said the Palestinians could discuss statehood in negotiations, "but they certainly cannot do it unilaterally, because that is a violation of the agreement".

Asked what he would do if such a step were taken, Mr Netanyahu said: "A great deal. I have a contingency plan ready." Israel army radio, quoting sources in the Prime Minister's office, said the plan called for the army to reoccupy most of the rural areas of the West Bank.

FBI chief accuses Saudis over bomb

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

SAUDI ARABIA was accused yesterday of withholding evidence about the terrorist bombing of a barracks in which 19 American servicemen were killed last June. The allegation was made by Louis Freeh, director of the FBI, who has made three visits to Riyadh since the bombing, to try to wring more information from the Saudis. They have remained intransigent despite a pledge by King Fahd of full collaboration with American investigators, including their right to question suspects and witnesses. Mr Freeh's admission of failure not only disclosed his own frustration but also amounted to rare public criticism by a Washington official of Saudi Arabia, supposedly a close American ally. It was a reversal of the Clinton Administration's previous insistence that the Saudis were willing to co-operate with the inquiry. Riyadh's refusal to be more forthcoming has important implications for American policy in the Middle East. The Saudis have been trying to pin blame for the bombings on Iran, saying that the terrorists were trained and supplied with Iranian backing in Lebanon. If that accusation were true, President Clinton would have a strong case for retaliating against Iran to avenge the loss of American lives. But he dare not act without concrete evidence. The Americans have been given only hearsay evidence in many cases and there is a great deal of evidence they have not seen. "I do not have enough information to make strong findings or conclusions," Mr Freeh told *The Washington Post*. With his requests for more details going unanswered, Mr Freeh said, the FBI's ability to channel its inquiries in different directions had been affected adversely. Saudi police did share forensic science details and physical evidence from the huge lorry bomb that tore off the front of Khobar Towers near the air base in Dhahran. But they have drawn the line at granting direct access to witnesses or potential suspects. Instead, the Americans have been offered only videotapes of interrogations and transcripts of conversations overheard on wiretaps.

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Clinton under fire over aide's help for Asian funder

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

ONLY three days into his second term, President Clinton's honeymoon ended abruptly yesterday in a series of embarrassing revelations indicating American policy favours were up for sale.

One of his longstanding aides had tried to push through an unusual \$6.5 million (£3.9 million) financing deal requested by one of the Democratic Party's largest Asian donors.

Four months after Mr Clinton signed a law last year barring financial transactions between American companies and countries accused of supporting terrorism, the Administration discreetly exempted Sudan where an American corporation was pursuing a \$930 million oil deal which later failed.

The exemption to the 1996 Anti-Terrorism Act allowed Occidental Petroleum Corporation to negotiate with Khartoum despite Sudan's position on a State Department list as sponsor of terrorism. Questions were raised as to whether Occidental, which donated \$600,000 to both political parties in the past two years, may have influenced the decision.

It is the financing deal, however, coming within days of Mr Clinton's promise to cleanse his party of all funds donated by foreigners living in the United States, that will touch a nerve at the White House. This may prove to be the smoking gun that Republicans have been seeking in their attempts to prove that American policy was auctioned to the highest bidder during last year's campaign.

It involved Maria Haley, one of the President's personal appointees at the Export-Import Bank. The deal she was pressing called for the American Government to help a company controlled by one of Thailand's wealthiest families to finance a blockbuster video store franchise in Bangkok.

Although the proposal was opposed by many in Washington, on the ground that it fell outside the bank's mandate of encouraging exports to support American employment, Ms Haley urged her staff to support the project.

The deal collapsed over questions about the operations of the franchise. The financial package was in large part structured by Pauline Kanchanalak, a Thai citizen living in Virginia, whose family's \$200,000 donations to the Democratic Party last year are under investigation.

The donations by Mrs Kanchanalak and her family were solicited by John Huang, the Democratic fundraiser at the heart of a federal inquiry into questionable contributions from Asian sources. He arranged for her to attend a coffee morning at the White House when Mrs Kanchanalak donated \$85,000.



AL GORE, the American Vice-President, kisses Madeleine Albright after she was sworn in yesterday as the first woman US Secretary of State. President Clinton, family members and senior administration officials clustered around Ms

Albright makes US history

Albright, 59, after she had taken the oath of office in the Oval Office — a day after the Senate confirmed her nomination. The daughter of a Czech diplomat and a former ambassador to the United Nations, Ms Albright has said that she will make enlarging NATO and improving ties with China her priorities during her tenure.

She said yesterday that her first task will be "to go over to the State Department and tell them all that we have a very important job to do". Ms Albright succeeds Warren Christopher, who was Secretary of State during Mr Clinton's first term.

Grounded pilots sue for right to fly past 60

FROM QUENTIN LEVITS IN NEW YORK

AIRLINE pilots in America are going to law in an attempt to stop ageing in the cockpit. They want to overturn a federal rule that stipulates retirement for pilots at 60.

The Professional Pilots Federation, a trade association with 2500 members, has brought an action in a Washington DC court against America's Federal Aviation Administration. FAA rules forbid any commercial aircraft with ten or more seats from being piloted by anyone older than 60.

The pilots say the law, in force since 1959, is discriminatory and prevents some of the most experienced — and therefore, they say, the safest — pilots from working.

Europe recently changed its regulations. Older pilots may now work as co-pilots, provided cockpit colleagues are younger than 60.

Not all American airline pilots support the legal action. The Air Line Pilots Association backs the status quo for reasons of "public safety".

US law duty-free Sinn Féin

US law duty-free Sinn Féin... (The rest of the text in this column is partially cut off and illegible.)

Americans angry after Cuba signs pact with Canada

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

CANADA angered and baffled Washington yesterday by reaching a remarkable 14-point agreement with Cuba that includes co-operation on human rights and striking back at the controversial American law designed to penalise Cuba's foreign investors.

The agreement, which runs counter to US efforts to isolate Cuba's Communist Government, was reached after a three-hour dinner between President Castro and Lloyd Axworthy, the Canadian Foreign Minister, followed by an unscheduled lunch of similar length for the pair the following day.

American reaction ranged from a conviction that the Canadians were naive, to assertions that they were determined to embarrass the United States. Or maybe they were trying to flout their independence from European allies who also oppose the Helms-Burton law, which seeks to impose sanctions on those trading with Cuba.

A spokesman for Jesse Helms, the Republican senator who co-authored the Bill, accused Mr Axworthy of going to Cuba with only one purpose in mind — "to poke a finger in the eye of the United States". The spokesman, Marc Thiessen, said the agreement would not improve the human rights of a single Cuban.

Nicholas Burns, the State Department spokesman, said the United States remained very sceptical that the Cuban Government was prepared to take meaningful steps that would lead to democratic rule in Cuba or reflect a change of attitude on human rights. Mr Burns said: "It doesn't make sense to reward a dictator in our hemisphere who is completely behind the times."

As if to underline Cuba's disregard for human rights, three dissidents were arrested during Mr Axworthy's 24-hour visit for trying to produce economic and independent news reports outside the state-controlled media. Two were later released.

Under the agreement, Canada and Cuba made an opaque pledge to broaden and deepen co-operation on human rights through joint seminars and academic exchanges between officials, professionals and experts. Mr Axworthy said he had requested the release of specific political prisoners in Cuba, but did not say if he had received any assurances about them.

Robert Robaina, the Cuban Foreign Minister, said there were no taboo subjects for Cuba, as long as it was treated with respect. But no matter how respectful the criticism, he made it clear that Cuba would accept lessons from no one and that human rights in Cuba were a strictly Cuban responsibility.

Canada and Cuba agreed to negotiate how to strike back at the US over Helms-Burton, but gave no details. They also agreed to co-operate over justice, including exchanges of judges and judicial training.

Unlike the United States, Canada has no trade embargo with Cuba and is Señor Castro's largest overseas trading partner. Mr Axworthy said the agreement was the Canadian way of doing things — "neither European nor American".

CNN expects to have man in Havana

By Eric Foner

CNN, the US-based television news channel, expects to get American permission next month to open a bureau in Cuba, the only country from which it has been banned.

The approval would end a battle between CNN and Washington that began in November when President Castro gave CNN permission to open a news office in Havana.

CNN made plans to become the first American news organisation to have a base there since Associated Press was expelled in 1960. But the channel was told it would need a US government licence to start operations.

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No accused of death go

No accused of death go... (The rest of the text in this column is partially cut off and illegible.)

THE TIMES FRIDAY JANUARY 24 1997

US lawsuit reveals duty-free tycoon as Sinn Fein donor

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

A PROMINENT Irish-American businessman who is Sinn Fein's single largest contributor in the United States has been forced by a bitter court battle to open carefully guarded records of his \$3.5 billion (£2.1 billion) global financial empire, making clear that he has made donations to many Irish causes.

According to *The New York Times*, Charles Feeney, a New Jersey businessman who made his fortune with an international network of duty-free shops and retailers, has given away \$600 million in charitable donations in the past 15 years.

Contributions to Irish educational and community groups account for more than half of the international gifts by Mr Feeney's two foundations, the Atlantic Foundation and the Atlantic Trust, and for more than a quarter of their total donations.

In addition, Mr Feeney has emerged as the single largest American donor to Friends of Sinn Fein, a group set up three years ago to air Sinn Fein's views in America and to raise funds. In the six months to last October Mr Feeney gave \$120,000 to the lobby group, three quarters of its income in that period. The money was

used to support its Washington office. According to *The New York Times*, Mr Feeney has given a total of \$280,000 to the group.

In a laudatory piece headlined "He gave away \$600 million, and no one knew", the newspaper, which usually treats Sinn Fein with sympathy, lauded Mr Feeney yesterday for his practice of secret philanthropy. It says that he has transferred all but about \$5 million of his net assets, estimated at \$3.5 billion, to his two charitable foundations.

In a rare interview, Mr Feeney, who is well known for flying economy class, is reported as saying: "I simply decided I had enough money. It does not drive my life. I am a what-you-see-is-what-you-get kind of guy."

Mr Feeney is reported as saying that his donations to Sinn Fein "had been carefully monitored to ensure that they supported only non-violent activities", and that he had continued supporting the Washington office despite the ceasefire's collapse last February "because I am hopeful that it will be renewed".

The secretive Mr Feeney has guarded the privacy of his financial affairs for years. His two foundations, and the par-

ent company of Duty Free Shoppers, the international duty-free empire he founded with Robert Miller, a fellow American, are registered in Bermuda and are exempt from filing detailed financial returns.

But, according to *The New York Times*, Mr Feeney has been obliged to lift a corner of the veil because of a fiercely contested lawsuit with Mr Miller, his business partner for 35 years.

Mr Miller has been fighting to stop Mr Feeney and a former shareholder from selling a controlling stake in Duty Free Shoppers to the luxury goods company LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, which is a supplier and direct competitor of Duty Free Shoppers.

Mr Feeney achieved prominence during the Irish peace process when he took part in a 1994 delegation of Irish-American businessmen to meet Irish political and business leaders.

According to yesterday's disclosures, his foundations have given more than \$10 million to each of Trinity College and Dublin City University, as well as many smaller gifts to educational and community projects.



Daniel Petrocelli, left, leading attorney for the plaintiff, Fred Goldman, with his client and Patti Goldman during the lunch break outside the Santa Monica court yesterday, while O.J. Simpson, right, arrives at court for the closing stages of the civil case against him

O.J. Simpson lawyer accuses police of prejudice

FROM REUTER IN SANTA MONICA

O.J. SIMPSON'S leading attorney accused the Los Angeles Police Department and the FBI of being prejudiced against his client in his closing argument at the former football star's civil trial yesterday.

Robert Baker said the two law enforcement agencies had spent "thousands and thousands of their dollars... to assist plaintiffs in a civil case" and asked: "Is that fair?" He said the proof of his claim was that he was

unable to get Los Angeles officers and detectives to testify without issuing subpoenas, while police and agents of the FBI freely volunteered their services to the plaintiffs.

"The FBI and the LAPD don't want a level playing field," Mr Baker said. His allegations added a new twist to the main defence theme that Los Angeles police botched the investigation and planted evidence to frame Mr Simpson for the June 1994 murders of Nicole Brown Simpson, his former wife, and Ronald Goldman, her friend. Mr Simpson was acquitted of

the murders after a criminal trial that ended in October 1995. His civil trial for causing wrongful death is in its closing stages and the jury is expected to begin its deliberations at any moment.

Daniel Petrocelli, who represents Goldman's father, Fred Goldman, earlier pleaded with the jury to force Mr Simpson to pay compensation to Mr Goldman for the loss of his son. But he stopped short of naming a figure, saying: "You can't put a value on the loss of a son, you can't put a price tag on it."

"True justice [for Fred Goldman] would be to see Ron Goldman walk through those doors right now, to see Nicole Brown Simpson playing with her children. That will never happen, they are gone forever," Mr Petrocelli said.

Then, turning and pointing dramatically at Mr Simpson, he said: "There is nothing he can do to bring him back. All you [the jury] have in your power to do is to bring about some small measure of justice by requiring the man responsible to pay for Fred Goldman's loss."

UN chief secures pledge on debt by White House

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

KOFI ANNAN, the United Nations Secretary-General, partially succeeded in his mission to Washington yesterday after President Clinton promised he would work with Republicans in Congress to repay the more than \$1 billion (£600 million) American debt to the world organisation.

After meeting Mr Annan at the White House, Mr Clinton said his federal budget would include a provision to ensure prompt repayment of the debt, an issue which has overshadowed relations between Washington and the UN.

"As the UN moves towards reform, it must also know that the United States is prepared to pay its way," said the President. "In the weeks ahead I will be working with Congress to reach an agreement in which America can pay our arrears to the UN."

At issue is whether Congress, increasingly dissatisfied with overspending at the UN, will accept Mr Annan's assurances to the White House and those on Capitol Hill that he

plans to reform the organisation in New York. He was due last night to meet Jesse Helms, the chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee and the most outspoken critic of UN policy.

Mr Clinton, allowing himself some political leverage, said he would not be able to persuade Republicans in Congress to pay the \$1.3 billion debt unless they were convinced that reform would indeed take place.

The secretary-general arrived in the capital the previous evening with the simple message that he had come as a "creditor, not a beggar", and admitted that over 50 years the UN had "picked up extra baggage".

Mr Annan, a Ghanaian diplomat who succeeded Boutros Boutros Ghali at the helm of the UN, acknowledged that relations with Congress had been acrimonious in the past, but he hoped to persuade opponents that money was needed to reshape the organisation in preparation for the 21st century.

In speaking to administration officials, he was essentially preaching to the converted — they agree the United States should pay its debts. The real struggle is with members of Congress, who have blocked past payments of dues.

Republican leaders have expressed willingness to pay off the debt, but have attached conditions that appear beyond the power of any UN chief to deliver.

While legally the United States owes the United Nations \$1.3 billion, the calculation in Washington is \$300 million less.



Annan has promised to bring in reforms

Two accused of soap star's death go on trial

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZILIANS watched a real-life soap opera unfold with the opening of the murder trial of a couple accused of using scissors to stab to death a young actress.

The long-awaited trial began on Wednesday in a packed Rio de Janeiro courtroom and will go out live on Globo TV. It will retrace what happened on the night of December 28, four years ago, when Daniela Perez's body was found dumped in a field in a plush Rio suburb.

The stunning actress, 22, had starred in the soap opera *Body and Soul*, watched by 100 million viewers nightly, and was the daughter of one of Brazil's better known screenwriters. She had been stabbed 18 times with a pair of scissors after suffering blows to the head, forensic science experts said.

Accused of her murder are her screen lover in the soap, Guilherme Padua, 27, and his now-estranged wife Paula

Thomaz, 25. They are said to have lured Daniela into their car at a service station, then driven her to a desolate spot to carry out the attack.

They have been in prison awaiting trial for the past four years. The actor, who first admitted the murder, now denies delivering the blows, saying his wife went for his co-star in a "jealous rage".

Senhora Thomaz gave birth to a son in prison and the couple separated during pre-trial proceedings at which each accused the other of the killing. She has denied involvement, saying she was shopping at the time.

The prosecution will argue that the killing was a silence rumour of an off-screen affair between the actors.

The attack happened on the night after Daniela, who played a brazen middle-class beauty, and Senhor Padua filmed an episode ending their screen romance.

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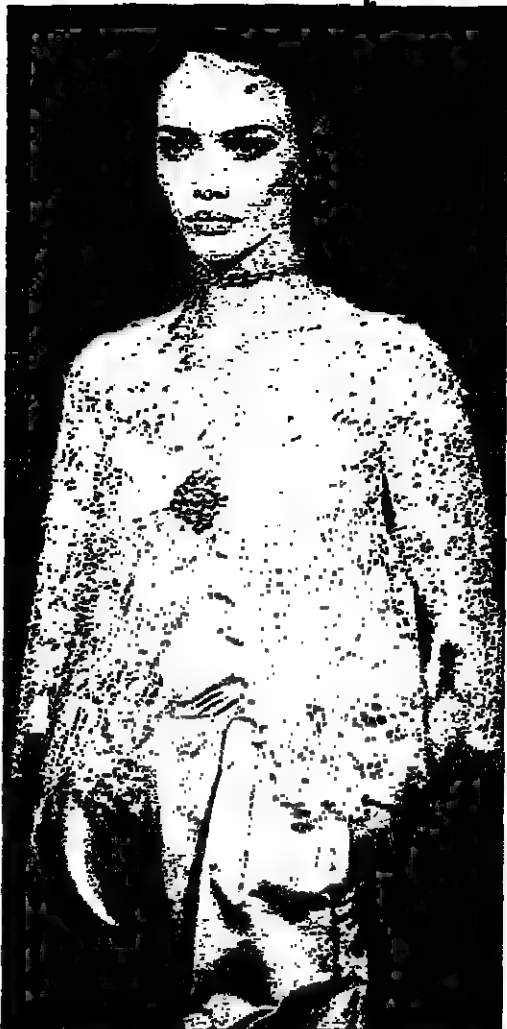
Couturiers are in a quandary. Iain R. Webb reveals how they resolve it in the spring collections

If the extreme messages coming from the spring-summer 1997 ready-to-wear collections weren't confusing enough this season — slip on a pretty chiffon dress and look delicate, or alternatively wear skin-tight trousers, a sexy boob tube with a pair of spike heels and look hard as nails (painted black, naturally) — then try making sense of the haute couture collections that previewed in Paris this week.

Haute couture is supposedly a dying art, yet the houses of Chanel, Lacroix and Balmain boast booming sales. Meanwhile, Givenchy and Dior have opted for the attention-seeking antics of Messrs Alexander McQueen and John Galiano as designers-in-chief respectively. The two British enjoints may well garner headlines, but will their provocative views of fashion suit the well-to-do women who are looking for a smart little two-piece for a mere £10,000, or something more extravagant, like the beaded Chinese coat-dress from Chanel which, last season, sold for more than £100,000?

What a dilemma! Should the designers simply create clothes tailor-made for their clients' needs and desires and run the risk of being described as boring and dull, or should they aim for front-page coverage by pandering to the press, only to find themselves accused of theatricality and full-blown fantasy?

McQueen was in such a quandary with his first collection for Givenchy and the resulting show fell somewhere between the two. His theme was classical mythology and he dressed his show accord-



CHANEL: (left) rough lace jackets. YVES SAINT LAURENT: unpretentious Parisian elegance

ingly — blonde muscle-bound cherubs (a barely disguised Marcus Schenkenberg), languishing high above the audience, Pegasus (thankfully only on the soundtrack) and everything (excepting one silver-snake coat and one in black) cut in white and gold. Wearing drapery toga dresses encased in strict leather corsets, the models with their fright hairdos, gilded faces and the occasional Minotaur horn looked not unlike extras from "Planet Olympia" in an early episode of *Star Trek*. Far from shocking with his cutting-edge vision, he displayed his razor-sharp tailoring skills in a collection that wouldn't scare a winged horse.

However, among the more obvious looks were exquisite McQueen moments: a plain white double-breasted trouser suit that revealed a cutaway back filled with a phoenix of golden lace; an ultra-slim dress with a coiled halter neck



JEAN PAUL GAULTIER: witty, sparkling headwork

and a tarnished gold satin dress twisted at the waist.

With all the hype surrounding Galiano's first show for Dior, and what with it being exactly 50 years since M Dior himself started the fashion world with his own New Look, it was never going to be an easy ride for the young Brit. Yet with a cool head and a sure hand he conjured up a collection from the exotic (chinoiserie in chaise longue and ebony satin, or an evening gown made from a Spanish shawl) to the sophisticated (wasp Prince of Wales suits and curvy jackets in white leather cutwork).

Overlaid ballgown skirts and Boldini-style chignon and lace evening gowns were charming, but aside from a playful steal from the Masai tribesman (brightly coloured beadwork) the collection lacked any sign of Galiano, the Urban Spaceman. He needs to get out more.

Fashion
journalist of
the year



IAIN R. WEBB



CHRISTIAN LACROIX: outfit ten provides a fine fashion moment for haute couture

The expert couturier knows the exact measure of his or her customer and so the collection by Jean Paul Gaultier (who showed his first-ever couture collection this season) was full of fashion "jokes" — a driving-glove that becomes a jacket; spangly tulle dresses that roll up and fit into a handbag; and bejewelled denim. There were great stretch tuxedos, a heavily beaded pinstripe suit, and lots of kimono jackets.

The established names appear, quite sensibly, to have ignored the new boys on the boulevard and concentrated on making great clothes for their clients. Ungaro showed a fine-tuned collection, still clashing colour, pattern and fabric but with a softer touch. Best of all were plain day coats worn over colourful floral and lace slip dresses.

There were a few little numbers in the show of Christian Lacroix, which provided some truly fine moments, specifically outfit ten — a roughly woven jacket in flame red, with salmon and black T-shirt and Indian pink and gold skirt; outfit 19 — a paisley satin organza coat worn over a curry-coloured lamé two-piece; and outfit 20 — a fuchsia-red and gold lace T-shirt with matching heavy oriental silk skirt. These were Lacroix at his most triumphant and forward-thinking but, for the most part, he chose to revisit past glories.

Valentino, Versace and Oscar de la Renta for Balmain offered some of the prettiest clothes of the week. The Orient provided inspiration for both Valentino and Balmain, while Versace looked to Spanish Harlem via *West Side Story*. Ruffles, layers of georgette and bouquets of flowers were fa-

miliar to all three. Frothy chiffon dresses appeared on the catwalks of each. Valentino continued to thrill with his ability to fuse the most fragile-looking fabrics with Versace offered beautifully draped, embellished jersey suits with asymmetric outlines. De la Renta, who gets the prize for best bride of the week for his pretty-in-sugar-pink creation, also offered some of the sexiest looks in black lace.

There were no better shows than those of Yves Saint Laurent and Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel. Both understand that the real pleasure of haute couture is the wearing of it (ask any woman who has). Neither courted the press with high jinks.

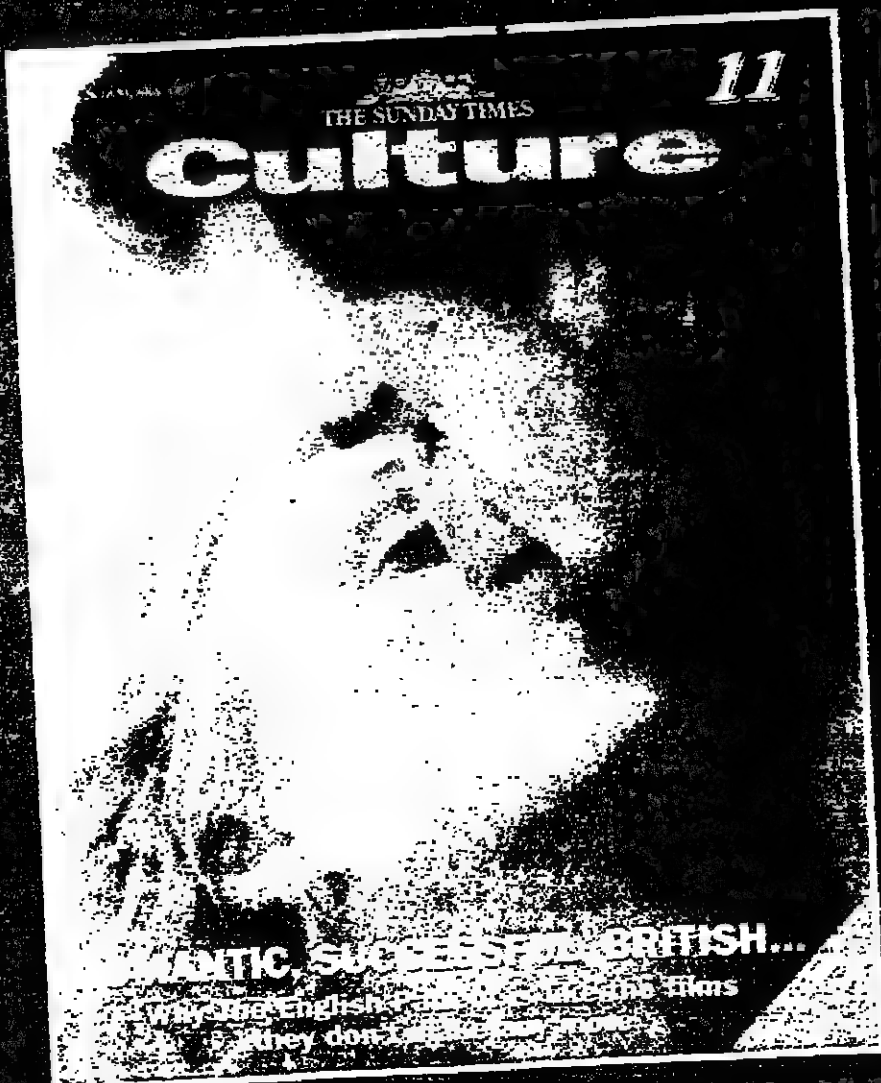
The Chanel look is all about pared-down chic with closely cut wool jackets matched with wide, flapping trousers or soft, see-through skirts. Scallop-edged dresses were panelled to hug the figure, while loose-woven tweedy pyjama suits and rough lace jackets were surely a witty double-take on the Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto's parody of the Chanel look.

It seems nothing stops Saint Laurent. His show was impeccable, from the tailored menswear-style suits to the frothy leathers and lace. This season the designer really scored after dark — draped pleated chiffon and colourful beadwork were special, but nothing could quite match the unpretentious elegance of his long, spare column dresses, sometimes worn with equally long opera coats in navy, white, ice-blue, ultramarine and pink. Nothing could be simpler.

Iain R. Webb is fashion director of *Elle* magazine.

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Other sex kittens have come and gone, but in Claudia Cardinale's case the cat has grown into a tigress.

What whisked her out of the blue was winning the Most Beautiful Girl in Tunis contest in 1957. The prize was a trip to the Venice Festival. Soon Italy's finest directors were queuing up for her: she was in Pasolini's *Il Bell'Antonio*, Visconti's *Rocco and His Brothers* and *The Leopard*. Even today, people think of her as Angelica, the girl who danced with Burt Lancaster. She was Claudia in Fellini's *8½*. Alberto Moravia wrote about her as "the next goddess of love". Visconti saw further: "Claudia is

Her son Patrick Cristaldi, now 37, lives in New York. She says he is "introverted, solitary, anti-authority". He has been an interior designer, a jeweller, a restaura-

Enduring appeal: Claudia reflects on her career, which includes *The Professionals* with Burt Lancaster (above right) and John Wayne in *The Magnificent Showman*

Miss Cardinale sympathises when American stars (such as Madonna, who impressed her by knowing everything about European films) come to Paris surrounded by bodyguards, while Claudia can

"My life is very simple, active. I walk a lot, I do my gymnastics. As a girl, I was a champion at basketball, volleyball, a tomboy.

Nostromo was shot in the same location as Ghia's *The Mission*, in the tropical heat of Cartagena, Colombia. "Imagine how complicated: a cast and crew from all over the world, and everything had to be built. Houses, harbour, boats,

She has completed four films since — nearly 100 films in 30 years. She loves the magic of the silver screen in a dark room. The only melancholy thing is going to funerals. Her beloved Mastroianni's. Fellini's. "The last time I saw Blake Edwards," she says sadly, "we realised we were the only two left from *The Pink Panther*. Well, life is like this."

As murder and mugging rates fall and victims turn mean, street crime in New York has become unfashionable, says **Quentin Letts**

Etne, a South American acquaintance, was stopped by a cellow youth in Greenwich Village and asked to hand over his wallet. Etne had had the benefit of a couple of beakers of two-star tequila not long before the incident occurred, so rather than hand over his money he thought to himself: "Hell, no!" and punched the mugger firmly

A similar tale comes from Doug Dechert, an uptown boulevardier. He was at home one recent night when there was a knock at his door. Doug, by nature an hospitable man, admitted a scrawny specimen who, on crossing the threshold, had the temerity to try to demand Doug's valuables. He received more than he bargained for when Doug seized hold of a ceremonial sword off his drawing

Nick Passmore, a 46-year-old British-born photographer, was walking down a residential street on the Upper West Side one day when a youth stopped him and announced that he was holding a concealed gun. "Dunno why," recalls Passmore, "but something just told me that he was bluffing. I simply brushed past him." Result: one distinctly disenchanted would-be mugger, who promptly tried his luck on a woman in the street, only to be told to eff off by her, too. Passmore, by the way, was right: he did not have a gun.

How different all this is from the start of the decade, when the Democrats were running the city and before the introduction of the hero police officer, policing strategy of the current (Republican) Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, whose no-nonsense creed has so impressed Tony Blair. To the ill-concealed irritation of the Left, the Giuliani tough approach has worked. His philosophy was that if you stamp hard on petty crime, the message will seep through to the more serious criminal that society has had enough. The impressive drop in murders followed a similar drop in muggings. In 1995 there were 35,353 muggings in New

York. In 1996 the number was down to 30,402. Rarely, nowadays, do you see the members of the Guardian Angels citizen protection force on the streets. There is simply less call for them.

Ralph Gardner Jr. a writer who used to work in the police press office, cautions against over optimism. "I still look over my shoulder when I'm walking in the dark," he says, rightly pointing out that the latest crime figures, while an improvement, are by no means exemplary. "Sure," says Gardner, "things are better, but the inimitable flavour of New York has not vanished entirely." Indeed. Another friend, Richard

Pohle, who is in his bank this week waiting to cash a cheque when a gang of thugs entered and announced a hold-up. "There wasn't much sign of resistance there," he laughs. "Those of us who were near the door made an immediate lunge for the exit and legged it off down the street. The bank security guard who should have been saving the day was the first guy out the door!"

It is still a good idea to be alert when walking around New York at night and women are probably well advised to take taxis if they are to travel a few blocks. Zoo McKay, a 27-year-old producer who was relieved of her handbag by a mugger on the New York subway last year, confesses that if she finds herself alone in a subway station these days, she leaves at once.

Even so, at the time of her mugging she showed the modern spirit and had a tug-of-war with the mugger over her bag (which contained no money). "It was against all the rules to resist, I know," she says, "but the guy was well dressed and I just got mad. What really depressed me was that he was a young black kid, just as the cliché goes. I don't like stereotypes, so I found that really much more depressing than the fact that I had been mugged." A very New York comment, that.

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A word in your ear, Mr Clarke

Stop waiting and start seeing, says Tim Congdon

Dear Ken. I am writing to you about Europe. But may I say at the start that in my opinion you have on the whole done a good job of managing the economy? Your period as Chancellor has seen the lowest inflation since the 1950s, as well as a substantial fall in unemployment.

If economic and monetary union were easy to implement and could be reconciled with Britain's continued existence as an independent nation, I would favour it. Unhappily, though, the difficulties are immense, not least because of different languages, scripts and so on. The total cost is clearly of the order of hundreds of billions of dollars. (I use "dollars" because — unlike euros — they are familiar, and — unlike pounds — they exist.) You might reply that the costs could be justified as a one-off investment to secure the convenience of a single currency for future generations. But are the proposals for transition sensible?

May I suggest that you ask your officials to find out how long it takes to alter automated teller machines, shop tills, and banks' and retailers' software systems? Then compare this with the timetable for introducing the euro. Companies will be reluctant to buy new machines and employ programmers before mid-1998 because they don't know which countries will qualify, or whether the project will go ahead at all. Six months is much too short a period to carry out all the changes.

On an even more banal level, ask your finance ministry counterparts in Europe whether the costs of the massive necessary publicity campaigns are to be covered by the European Commission or by member governments, and inquire what provisions have been made. So far the amounts of money being spent are derisory.

Of course, these are points for humble engineers and accountants rather than great statesmen, but I am confident you will not be satisfied by the answers to such questions. With 1999 less than two years away, Europe's governments and peoples are not serious about the euro. Any rational and unbiased observer would say postponement is essential if the project is not to degenerate into farce.

But the crucial condition is the second one, the condition that the introduction of the new currency be compatible with the continued existence of Britain as an independent nation. Before Christmas you said in the Commons that "there is no Conservative politician who is a federalist", which presumably means that you are opposed to a European superstate.

You went on to say that talk about the creation of a superstate "arouses public fears and deprives the public of sensible information". I have to object. Leading German politicians, including Helmut Kohl, have said on many occasions that monetary union is a prelude to political union. And there is no previous example of significant sovereign nations sharing a single currency. Monetary union has always involved political union.

The central reason why monetary union must result in political union is simple. The management of a nation's currency is connected with the management of its public debt, and the management of public debt is inseparable from fiscal policy. Fiscal policy — the control of public expenditure and taxation — is the cherished prerogative of all national parliaments. It follows that monetary policy can be centralised only if fiscal policy is also centralised, and that is the end of national sovereignty.

Recent differences between Germany and France over fiscal sovereignty are minor compared with the implications of Germany's almost certain resistance to Italian participation. Despite harsh and very unpopular fiscal restraint in the past two years, the Italians have failed to reduce the ratio of public debt to national income. It is still above 120 per cent, more than twice the permitted rate.

In Germany as in Britain, most of the public are opposed to the single currency. The political elite, which is almost entirely in favour, knows that it can push the project through only if Italy is excluded. But if Italy is excluded, Spain, Portugal and Greece must be excluded too. These countries might be provoked into forming a blocking minority at the inter-governmental conference in 1998, which in theory could stop the whole project.

The cause of European integration is about to suffer its worst setback since the establishment of the Common Market in 1957. The economic and monetary union will fail. Ever since it was mooted in the late 1980s the key nations have been in a daydream. As the deadline approaches, they must wake up.

If you are a Europhile and believe in increased European integration (as the newspapers say), your duty is twofold. First, you must warn your friends in Europe to pull back before it is too late. Our semi-detached position will prove justified, but we must not crow. We don't want the collapse of monetary union to lead to financial instability in our neighbourhood. Financial instability followed by political instability had calamitous results for Europe in the 1920s and 1930s.

Secondly, you and Mr Major must abandon the wait-and-see policy, for the good of the nation as well as for electoral advantage. Quite frankly, Britain's banks and retailers have been troubled for years by the uncertainty of the euro, even if we took an irreversible commitment to go ahead now. But at a deeper level, you and other finance ministers are not truly willing to hand over your fiscal powers to an as-yet unnamed central body in Brussels. This makes it certain that the single currency project will disintegrate. Nothing can be lost, and much can be gained, by immediately excluding Britain from any involvement in economic and monetary union for the lifetime of the next Parliament.

Yours, Tim

The author is a member of the Treasury panel of independent forecasters.



DESIGN FOR A NEW BRITANNIA

All-party witch-hunt

The proposed paedophile register demeans us all and will protect no one

There are times when, struggling against the swell of public alarm, one begins to doubt one's own sanity. Is it really the rest of the world that is mad? This is how it must have felt to a sceptic in Salem, Massachusetts, at the time of the witch-hunts.

Bernard Levin expressed that sense of exasperation in the 1960s, during a wave of press and public anxiety about decadence in high places. Lord Denning was hearing a government inquiry into such mysteries as the identity of the "headless man" in a Polaroid photograph of the lower half of a socialist partygoer, aroused by the attentions of the then Duchess of Argyll. One minister was persuaded by Lord Denning to submit his penis for examination in Harley Street. "Even in years so copiously provided with material on which madness could feed fat," wrote Levin, this was "something so extraordinary, and in many ways so significant, that it deserves examination as detailed as that which the Minister underwent."

How, then, may we spot these madmen early? Look out for the existence of an early malice: all-party support. And so to the Government's proposals for a "paedophile register", contained in the Home Secretary's Sex Offenders Bill, a slim tract of which the second Commons reading comes on Monday. Such is the offender-bashing imperative now gripping Britain that Michael Howard announced it to cheers at the Tory conference. His proposals have encountered quibbles but almost no principled opposition from any quarter. Someone has to blast this idiocy out of the water.

The plan is to force convicted or cautioned sexual offenders to register, their addresses with the police, whenever and wherever they move, for a period varying between five years and the rest of their lives. The declared aim is to allow the police to keep an up-to-date register of the whereabouts of sex offenders. It will be available for consultation by prospective employers in cases where a job involves (for instance) contact with children. The Bill looks set to secure a speedy passage through the Commons, virtually unopposed.

There are concerns about details. As the declared aim is the protection of children, it appears strange that the crime of gross indecency — a consensual offence involving homosexuals over the age of consent and caught together in public places — should be included among the sex

offences subject to registration. The Stonewall Group is taking this up. It seems odd that an offence of which the police take so light a view as merely to caution the culprit nevertheless puts him on the list. But these are secondary concerns. Few voices — and certainly not the Opposition — have been raised to confront the central principle: that a great swathe of offenders who have served their sentences and returned — disgraced at the workplace, disgraced with landlords, disgraced among their families and their friends, and almost certainly unemployed — to try to begin their lives again, should now be bound to the 20th-century equivalent of the leper's bell. This is primitive nonsense. Nobody says so?

Look first at an idea put to Mr Howard which David Maclean, his Minister of State, says is for consideration. The police might be authorised — American-style — to notify local residents when a sex offender moves into the neighbourhood. One is left gasping in disbelief. Has Maclean read what happened recently to a man on the Garrets Green Estate in Birmingham when a housing officer allegedly tipped off neighbours that he had a conviction for sexual assault? The officer was suspended, and the Liberal Democrat councillor who supported him became a local hero. A lynch-mob atmosphere blew up. The man and his mother were forced to move. Where, Mr Howard? Where are they supposed to go?

Look at what happens to sex offenders in prison at the hands of other prisoners. The instinct to stigmatise and hurt such people runs deep. Is it to be whipped up beyond the prison gates too? Labelling people is always hateful. Judged even against the crude horror of the gas chamber, there was something uniquely nasty about forcing Jews and homosexuals to display conspicuously and at all times the badges they were forced to sew onto their clothing. It is chilling to force a man to drag around with him an advertisement for something that others hate and he cannot change.

Matthew Parris

I am mystified as to its purpose. There is no practical possibility that police officers could in any meaningful sense "keep an eye" on all these people. These are some of the most private of crimes, rarely committed in the street. A better case could be made for letting the local constabulary know when a former mugger, drug-dealer or informer of grievous bodily harm moves into their area: here the information might just prove useful in the panda car or on the beat.

And an untruth is being put about by enthusiasts for the Bill, which ought to be nailed. It has been suggested that sexual offenders are particularly prone to reoffend. This is not the case. Here are some Home Office figures (for England and Wales) for prisoners reconvicted within two years of discharge from prison during 1992. They are expressed as percentages of the total number discharged in each category. All offences, 51%; burglary, 70%; theft and handling, 62%; robbery, 45%; violence against the person, 41%; drugs offences, 26%; fraud and forgery, 25%; sexual offences, 16%. No category of offender has a lower percentage of reoffenders than that covering sexual offences. You can nudge the figures up by speculating

that sexual offenders are uniquely unlikely to be caught, or by excluding already offenders, but no minister can find honest support for the assertion that sex offenders are less likely than others to mend their ways.

What, then, of Mr Howard's declared aim of helping employers to check up on jobseekers — for instance, when jobs involve work with children?

He does not need this Bill for that purpose. The register will be centrally held and compiled (as it already can be) from court records. This measure can only usefully add the individual's latest address, and this depends upon the offender's word. No less, or more, reliable as a double-check, would be requiring a signed assurance that the applicant has no relevant convictions. A one-clause Bill could make a fraudulent assurance to that effect a criminal offence.

No, look closely at the reasoning behind the Sex Offenders Bill and it falls apart. In theory we are all on the voters' roll at our current addresses already. In theory, and in practice, details of convictions are already recorded against all offenders' names, and held centrally. But Mr Howard finds an urgent need for an up-to-the-minute list of the whereabouts of all serious sex offenders — and nobody else.

Why? Reams of newspaper and a jumble of faces have surrounded me all week, but nothing answered that question. Then all at once in the small hours of Thursday morning, the answer came. There is no reason for this Bill. No reason at all. It is simply a piece of electioneering.

It does nothing, achieves nothing, helps nobody, protects nobody. It demeans and discourages. For some it will render just a little more forlorn the hope that can redeem any human being: the hope that we might reinvent ourselves and start afresh.

But it raises a saloon-bar cheer. And in order for Michael Howard — and Jack Straw — to raise a cheer before a general election, the principle is to be established that there shall be categories of free citizen against whom no process of law is outstanding but who — in some cases for the rest of their lives — must trudge into a local police station whenever they move to a new address, and tell a constable, upon whose discretion they know they cannot rely, that they are former sex-offenders, come to live in the area.

It is shameful. It will have all-party support.

Philip Howard



■ Cadet corps has many pleasures, all of them incidental

James Thomson, the author of *Rule Britannia*, may not have had the cadet corps on his mind when he wrote: "Delightful task! / To rear the tender thought, / To teach the young idea how to shoot." But sensitive children need not be alarmed by the Government's hasty electioneering proposal to give them all the chance to join the military cadets. A cadet corps has room in it for all shapes and conditions of boys. And no doubt today girls also — a bonus. The duties are as light or heavy as the cadet chooses to make them. And the pleasures are great.

1. Communally stamped, the parade-ground can be a pleasure. Just as all children should be taught to dance in order to co-ordinate their childish and flimsy bodies, the simultaneous smash of 1,000 feet on the ground, the lesson in the satisfactions of teamwork. (We used to put pebbles in our magazines to make the cracks louder.) The Lord Mayor's Show and Essex-girl cheerleaders parade the pleasure the young still take in synchronised movements.

2. Even the uncoordinated, whose left hands automatically shoot forward in time with their left feet, can find endearing platoon Ptochios. And the ditherer, who cannot time his "Abessoooo... TURRRR" to coincide with left feet hitting the ground gives the sergeant the opportunity to scream the old joke: "Say something to them, laddy, even if it's only goodbye."

3. The corps teaches the useful lesson that adult rage can be simulated. There is profit in learning at a tender age that such murderous abuse as "I'll have your bleeding guts for garters, you Eff-Fig" and "I'll have you off the parade ground so fast that your feet won't even touch the ground" are sometimes self-parody.

4. Drill introduces you to rich English occupational dialects, such as pronouncing "Arms" as "Hips".

5. Field days are days off lessons in the peaceful countryside, with packed lunches and spirals of blue smoke rising from the brackets. Cadets learn teamwork by taking it in turns to keep one for the umpire. And resourceful, hungry or mischievous boys once supplemented their evening rations by pushing pencils down the muzzles of their blank-loaded 303s to harpoon the Queen's tame pheasants in Windsor Great Park.

6. Corps teaches you to take a pride in appearance. In particular you learn that it is a grave moral offence not to clean the Blanco off the inside of the brass buckles of your belt and gaiters. And that anybody who appears in public without a collar pin is improperly dressed.

7. You learn to move decisively. For example, by taking emergency actions to the Bren gun. Or when a cadet from Bromsgrove at camp floated a burning fireship of *The Times* down the communal outdoor "grab-or-go-under" lavatory after breakfast. This made impossible dignified senior boys take timing high jumps in rapid succession, far more briskly than a Bren gun or Her Majesty's mortally lazy pheasants.

8. You learn self-control. For example, our corps lined the route inside Windsor Castle for George VI's funeral. We had bulled our boots with spit and spoons red-heated over candles for weeks. The honour and solemnity of the occasion had been drilled into us. So as the hearse approached, we stood on our arms reversed — a manoeuvre involving seven separate movements, and 600 cadets counting ten silently but in unison. Small boys barely 4ft high are likely to do themselves an injury at this drill. And then a horse of the escort of Household Cavalry deposited the coarsest comment available to it splat over my tecsaps. But not a flicker disturbed the solemn ranks bowed over our reversed rifles. Well, hardly a flicker.

9. Drill is usually justified for preparing its students to obey orders instantly and without question in the hurly-burly of battle. But it can also be treated as a simple but satisfying exercise in mass movement, like *Top of the Pops*. And it can also be commended for teaching the old sergeant's axiom that "Bullshit Baffles Brains". That is, if you do something noisily and confidently enough, with enough bang and glitter, you may bluff your way past the inspecting officers who lie in wait in later life.

10. The cadet corps teaches you to change your clothes fast, darn your socks, and to keep two razors — one for inspection and the other for use.

D.I.C.

Proops scoops

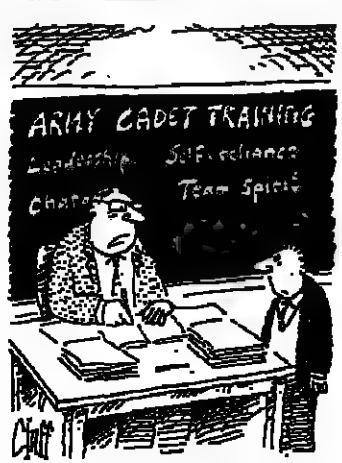
EXPECT heaving bosoms and many a tear on Monday at the memorial service for Marje Proops, the agony aunt who for a quarter of a century eclipsed all others with her column in the *Daily Mirror*.

Fleet Street is gathering itself for the most formidable collection of tabloid therapists ever seen. Organisers have been talking privately of the fight between agony aunts for the prime role in the service, now allocated to Anne Robinson, who will read one of Miss Proops's columns. The aunts vigorously deny suggestions of competition.

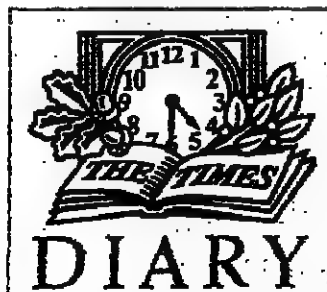
"We're not war correspondents you know, all competing for scoops," insists Claire Rayner, who isn't speaking at the service. "We're all in it for the same reason — to help people." Eve Pollard, who has taken over Marje's column on the *Sunday Mirror*, says she would be "amazed" if there were any jealousy. "People do really think she was one of the great names," she adds.

David Seymour, the *Mirror* Group's political editor, who

helped to organise the event, says: "The main problem was that she had such a damn long life that there were hundreds of people who wanted to speak." But one bar-room commentator, remarking on the probable presence under one roof of Anne Robinson, Eve Pollard, Miriam Stoppard, Felicity Green and Claire Rayner, was



"Conscientious objectors need notes from their mothers"



sceptical. "Not since the dreadnoughts amassed for the Battle of Jutland have so many armour-clad battleaxes set sail."

Euro-cake

WHEN Malcolm Rifkind received early typescripts of the speech he made yesterday on Europe, he found that his secretary had interpreted his scrawl of General de Gaulle's remark about a "Europe des patries" as a rather more interesting "Europe des pastries". Before sending back his revisions, the Foreign Secretary scribbled in the margin: "Let them eat cake."

The episode reminds one Westminster veteran of a report once sent to the Foreign Office by an

Ambassador in Switzerland, titled "A Swiss role for Europe". The document passed all the way up to the then minister, Roy Hattersley, before anyone saw the joke.

● *Filming in Mexico on The Mask of Zorro has been delayed, holding up the likes of Sir Anthony Hopkins and Antonio Banderas. All the swords from America have been impounded by Mexican Customs.*

Real stew

JUST DAYS after the dismissal of Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, another pillar of *The Sunday Telegraph* has been toppled.

Josceline Dimbleby, the cookery editor and estranged wife of David, has received a letter from the editor of the *Telegraph's* magazine informing her that she is no longer required. She has worked there happily for 15 years.

Mrs Dimbleby sounded angry yesterday. "I've been there 15 years, and this new magazine editor has been there just one," she said. "It's all such a muddle I'm still trying to find out what has happened."

She added that she had not heard a word from the paper's Editor Dominic Lawson, calls to his



Unholy alliance: the duchess and the Pope share a costume

office went unheeded yesterday — he was rubbing sunscreen into his body in the Caribbean.

Vestments

WORRYING NEWS for Roman Catholics: the Duchess of York and the Pope share a fashion designer. Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, who created the multicoloured plastic coat of many horrors worn by the duchess to the reopening of Paris's



Unholy alliance: the duchess and the Pope share a costume

some new vestments for His Holiness.

"It is a fabulous project, but I say nothing more," says a spokesman for the House of Castelbajac. The Pope, who is known to wear white Doc Marten boots under his cassock, is planning a visit to Paris this summer following his visit to Rheims last year. The thought of natty plastics in Notre Dame is enough to make a Trappist scream.



RULING OUT

Labour should now step up to the Tory line

Signs abound that the Conservatives are preparing for an early election. Populist announcements tumble out of the government machine: after the new Royal Yacht Britannia, the permanent incarceration of Myra Hindley and the expansion of the cadet force, comes a policy on the single currency that may yet unite the Tory party and win over voters in time for the only poll that matters.

On paper, the single currency position has not changed. Britain still has the option to join in the first wave in January 1999. But all the stress yesterday was on the improbability of that happening. The argument that ministers were using runs as follows. If EMU begins at all (which is not certain), it will almost certainly be on the basis of fudged convergence criteria. Britain will not join if the criteria have been fudged. Ergo, Britain is "highly unlikely" to join.

Ever since John Major ruled out ruling out membership for the lifetime of the next Parliament, this was his clear escape route. Even Kenneth Clarke could be persuaded that it would not be in Britain's interest to join a single currency whose members' convergence was not sustainable. But the Chancellor had been holding out until yesterday, claiming that it was not possible at this stage to judge whether the criteria would or would not be met.

Mr Clarke has now been overruled, and not before time. The convergence of the member states that want to join the currency has long been as unsustainable as the Chancellor's position. As a figleaf, Mr Clarke can claim that Britain's option to join remains. Yesterday he was determined to emphasise the unlikelihood of EMU going ahead

rather than the unlikelihood of Britain being part of it. But it is clear to all that the chances of this country joining the first wave under a Tory government are now infinitesimal.

This was confirmed by the news later in the day that the first Queen's Speech after an election (if the Conservatives won) would contain no legislation relating to the single currency. Given that, by the end of 1998, the Government would have to have legislation to make the Bank of England independent, to reverse Britain's opt-out and to hold a referendum if it had decided to join, this undertaking hardens the position still further.

In political terms, the decision may eventually help Mr Clarke. His party has seen him as the only obstacle to a sensible and unifying policy on EMU. If the Tories had lost the election with their previous version of the "wait and see" position, the Chancellor would have been blamed. This shift is a sign that, at last, he is willing to accept rather than fight against political reality.

It would of course be preferable if the Government expressed principled rather than pragmatic opposition to EMU. But this new position will make it easier for all Conservative candidates to issue roughly similar election addresses. The onus is now on Labour to respond. As *The Times* reported last October, Tony Blair too thinks it unlikely that he would join the first wave. Many voters would like that position made public. Choosing a party to govern the country for five years is a big enough task. Electing a party that might do something irreversible is momentous. Mr Blair now owes it to the electorate to spell out where he stands on the most critical question to face the country in decades.

RIFKIND'S SOAPBOX

A voter-friendly British message for jobless Europe

At first sight, Malcolm Rifkind's judgment that it is time for Britain "to take the debate on Europe to Europe" may seem little short of bizarre. A Government which has spent the past three years insisting that the debate on Europe's future was moving Britain's way must surely have been arguing its case in foreign capitals. Yet his sense of timing is less bizarre than appears, and the words are well chosen because what he means by them is a departure from relying almost entirely on the traditional methods of fighting Britain's corner in corridors and chancelleries.

Yesterday's Cabinet decision on a single currency supplies the vital missing ingredient in a Conservative policy towards the European Union that at long last can be presented as both coherent and solidly in the middle of the national consensus. Thus armed, Mr Rifkind is readying "a new diplomacy", which he hopes will reach out beyond the continental policymaking-élites to open up a genuine citizens' debate about the future of the nation state, the loyalty a federal Europe could command and whether ordinary people understand just what their leaders mean by deeper European integration.

Most subversively, because this is a question their own politicians avoid putting, he believes that Britain could encourage people in France, Germany and elsewhere in the EU to ask themselves what they personally stand to gain, and to lose, from plans to accentuate the supranational character of the Union.

As Klaus Kinkel recently discovered when he offered Britain a bit of unsolicited advice at the new year, Mr Rifkind is embarking on territory where even angels must pick their way. Yet his assessment that now is Britain's moment to refresh the European debate makes sense.

To be effective, any message requires a minimum of readiness to listen on the part of the audience, and until recently, a British accent was enough to deprive the best

argument of most of its force. But in today's Europe, British pragmatism and Britain's scepticism about Europe's federal destiny no longer inspire the slightly patronising jokes about "isolationism" that they did in the immediate aftermath of Maastricht.

That is because where Britain is currently most obviously isolated is in its successful bucking of the continental rale's progress to massive, seemingly unshiftable, unemployment in France, Italy, Spain and even Germany. Much of this is ascribable to long years of public overspending, coupled with layers of social protection that have frozen labour markets, and a reliance on state corporatism that, as Mr Rifkind suggested to French businessmen last night, has roots in the hard years of postwar reconstruction.

But politically, what matters is that governments have blamed the need to meet the Maastricht criteria for EMU to justify reforms they are compelled to undertake. With youth unemployment at 27 per cent in France, 33 per cent in Italy and 42 per cent in Spain, Maastricht is currently about as popular as is the International Monetary Fund in African kleptocracies. In France, where the schism between public and political elite is in the open, the chief beneficiary of the Government's unpopularity is Jean-Marie Le Pen's ultra-nationalist party. Once the French public grasps that EMU will not mean the end of austerity, there could be a social explosion.

A British Foreign Secretary cannot and should not fan fires. But he can press home the essential British message that accountability within the nation state is the bedrock of democracy, which is ignored at Europe's wider peril. He could win converts, too, to the idea that a "flexible" Europe must genuinely respect the diversity of its members. Without playing John Bull in Europe's china shop, it is worth testing his proposition that Britain's view of Europe is closer to that of ordinary Europeans than their political masters like to believe.

UNSTABLE POLICY

The arts need national popularity more than lottery money

Yesterday, the Arts Council of England turned a significant corner. Whichever way its new, woefully named "stabilisation programme" is dressed up, its prime aim is to divert some National Lottery proceeds away from building projects and into the more urgent matter of keeping the country's hard-pressed theatres, orchestras and opera companies in business.

The task is enormous. Britain's regional theatres have run up a combined £8 million deficit. The Royal Opera House and English National Opera are each £3 million in the red. Famous orchestras survive only because their bankers are patient and enjoy Brahms.

The Arts Council is keen to deny that it is using lottery money simply to bail out a bunch of losers. Nevertheless, the stabilisation programme does channel lottery money into tasks that the Arts Council, in earlier days, might reasonably have expected its government grant to cover. The Arts Council has ventured down this path only with caution (just £5 million will be committed to stabilisation next year), suggesting that it is well aware of the political dangers ahead.

Having broken the earlier rule that lottery money should be used only for capital projects, the Arts Council may find itself pressed to raid its lottery coffers more and more for urgently needed funds. It now receives about £250 million each year from the lottery,

compared with only £186 million from the Government. The list of worthwhile building projects on which to spend the lottery windfall is not infinite. The pressure for emergency funding would probably increase under a Labour government.

To place our world-class performers entirely at the mercy of a source of revenue as unpredictable as the lottery would be irresponsible and short-sighted. It would send the wrong signals to the world about the social and cultural values considered important by the British Government. But if the Arts Council is to continue to receive a fifth of the lottery's profits it must quickly find good new ways of using the money. As the recent outcry over English National Opera's plan for a new theatre showed, public opinion has turned strongly against the building of yet more culture palaces for the middle classes.

The answer is to launch an all-out campaign to attract new audiences, particularly among the young. British performers, artists and writers are among the best in the world; we are properly proud when they win international prizes. Now they must fight for the most important prize of all, the widespread support of their own compatriots. Fifty years of state subsidy have not, so far, brought that prize within the reach of serious culture. Popularisation, not stabilisation, should be the Arts Council's new watchword.

Fear of genetically modified foods

From the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Iceland Group

Sir, Not being a scientist, technologist, or biochemist makes me eminently qualified to discuss the fashionable issue of genetically modified foods. All the screams of scientific evidence and the deliberations of food experts lack one essential ingredient — the common-sense view of the normal consumer.

Like most scientific experiments, genetically modifying foods started with the best of intentions. If plants can be made less resistant to disease and herbicide weedkillers can be used more sparingly, this must be good: more food to feed the Third World and a more environmentally friendly approach to farming.

The principle must be applauded, but in practice we are corrupting nature and we have sufficient evidence to show that nature fights back — salmonella, listeria, BSE. The so-called experts allowed dead sheep to be eaten by herbivores — and we were used as human guinea-pigs.

Whilst most of us are still struggling to understand the terminology, the chances are we're already eating genetically modified foods. Tomato paste and some cheeses are currently available in supermarkets; they have generally been claimed to have enhanced flavour qualities at more competitive prices and have been labelled as being "genetically modified". The consumer has hitherto had a clear choice.

We are now faced with a different problem: labelling may no longer be an option, largely because of the creation of a genetically modified soya bean by the chemical multinational Monsanto in America. With the sanction of the US food authorities, this has been mixed with natural soya and put into worldwide distribution, and it will thus become impossible for manufacturers and retailers to know the true source of the soya in their products and to label them accordingly.

Genetically modified maize is also winging its way over the "pond": same problem, different company — Ciba-Geigy — but potentially more of a threat. Maize has been genetically modified to make it resistant to the European corn-borer pest, but this process may make animals feeding on the maize resistant to antibiotics: a classic case of solving one problem only to create another.

It is totally unacceptable that American companies should dictate to us in this way. We must demand total traceability for all food and clear labelling. Natural and genetically modified foods must, in the future, be separated at source and processed, transported and utilised in food manufacturing accordingly.

Government action is needed on two counts: we must know the source of products and labelling must be mandatory. By genetically modifying foods we are messing with the building blocks of life.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM C. WALKER,
Chairman and Chief Executive,
Iceland Group plc,
Second Avenue,
Deeside Industrial Park,
Deeside, Flintshire,
January 17.

Leaving hospital

From Mr D. L. Crosby

Sir, Mr Nigel Harris (letter, January 16) is incorrect that the discharge of patients from hospital is the sole responsibility of a doctor. Quite rightly, the local social services department may veto medical discharges if satisfactory home or community care has not been arranged.

This is a much more common problem than patients being sent out of hospital before they are sufficiently well. At any time, at least 10 per cent of hospital beds are occupied by people who would not need to do so were it not for their lack of social support.

Obviously, this is a major cause of both the hospital bed shortage and the pressure to discharge other patients the moment they appear well enough to go home.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID CROSBY (Chairman),
Cardiff Community Healthcare,
Trenwydd,
Fairwater Road, Llandaff, Cardiff,
January 20.

Winning colours

From Mr P. R. Smith

Sir, Mr Alan Shuback (letter, January 18) states that, despite numerous kit changes, the England football team has only won one World Cup — a competition involving the whole world and culminating in finals played in a different country and continent every four years; whereas the New York Yankees have won 23 World Series — an annual competition involving only North American baseball teams — without the aid of a kit change.

To be fair, a comparable competition would be the Home International Championship that sadly ended in 1984, which England won 34 times and shared a further 20 times.

Yours faithfully,
P. R. SMITH,
5 Ashworth Close,
Newark, Nottinghamshire.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Tide of opinion on proposal to replace Britannia

From Mr William Jory

Sir, The British taxpayer will greet the news of a replacement for the Royal Yacht Britannia with dismay (reports and leading article, January 23). For over a quarter of a century Britannia was financed by our always-stretched defence budget as a hospital ship, but was never used as one, being kept away from the Falklands and Gulf Wars. In the former, 800 schoolchildren were taken off an educational voyage on the Uganda and she was dispatched instead.

Now, according to your leader, a replacement would be justified for her "value to exports alone". If this is the true justification for the ship, surely businessmen, so keen to promote their own goods abroad her, could finance, build and run their own "royal" yacht. This could then be leased to the Royal Family when required. Other successful exporting nations appear to manage very well without such a yacht.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM JORY,
The Old House, Michelmersh,
Nr Romsey, Hampshire,
January 23.

From Mrs E. A. Ralsman

Sir, The Royal Yacht Britannia is not a perk for the Royal Family. It is an embassy ship. The Queen and other members of the Royal Family are our most sought-after roving ambassadors. We do not expect business to pay for our embassies even though a major part of their work is to promote British business. This helps to promote national prosperity. It is for the State, that is the taxpayer, to pay.

Our standing is judged by the quality of our representation. We should not stint in its presentation.
Yours faithfully,
ANNE RALSMAN,
Netheravon House,
Netheravon Road South, W4.

European integration

From Mr Stephen Woodard

Sir, Anatole Kalinsky, in his article of January 14, discusses the idea that European integration may fail because the member states of the European Union fight "tooth and nail" for their national interests in Brussels and will not suddenly start to think of themselves as Europeans.

However, building a united Europe is not supposed to eliminate national differences or ignore national interests. The European Union's institutions allow the member states to achieve things together which they could not achieve separately, the obvious example being the single market, by providing a framework of decision-making and law enforcement.

It is expected that all member states will use these institutions to promote their national interests whilst working together to forge policies which overall will benefit each member state. The European Union is an ongoing negotiation where the emphasis is in painstakingly building consensus and agreement.

Rabies and quarantine

From Mr Paul DeVile

Sir, Valerie Elliott accurately reports my reservations concerning the "government proposals" outlined in her report (January 11), but it is overstating the case to describe me as a "strong opponent of any relaxation". Both the British Veterinary Association and the National Canine Defence League, for whom I act as spokesperson from time to time, have consistently said that a system such as that proposed would be perfectly acceptable, provided that it can be seen to provide the same level of protection as that afforded by quarantine. Indeed the NCDEL would welcome a system that reduced or eliminated the need for quarantine, while at the same time ensuring that the UK remains its rabies-free status. I am in correspondence with the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mrs Angela Browning, who informs me that her department is studying various options, of which the "passport for pets" scheme is presumably one. Should a viable and enforceable alternative to quarantine be identified, a risk assessment exercise will follow before a final decision is taken.

This, combined with a feasibility study by those responsible for the implementation of any new regulations to ensure that we can cope with the anticipated massive increase in the number of importations, is surely the right approach before abandoning a system that, albeit now possibly outdated, has stood us well for high on 100 years.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL DEVILE
(Chief Veterinary Officer),
National Canine Defence League,
17 Wakley Street, EC1,
January 13.

Athens and Ankara

From the High Commissioner for Cyprus

Sir, For over 22 years Turkey has been grossly violating the most basic principles of international law by her continuing illegal occupation of part of the territory of the independent, sovereign state of Cyprus.

Yet, in your leading article of January 13, "Athens and Ankara", you accuse the victim of "irresponsible brinkmanship", merely for announcing that it intends to defend itself in the event of further attack, and you overlook the need for any self-respecting government to protect its people.

You apparently assume that a solution to the Cyprus problem would have been just around the corner were it not for my Government's decision to buy Russian surface to air missiles. This ignores the fact that all previous negotiations to find a permanent settlement to the Cyprus problem have failed exclusively because of Turkey's illegal use of military force, her continuing colonisation of the territory she controls and her gross abuse of fundamental human rights of all Cypriots.

It is Turkey which is in breach of international law in Cyprus. Countless UN Security Council resolutions remain unimplemented by Turkey. Un-

From Captain Richard Sharpe, RN, Editor of Jane's Fighting Ships

Sir, Shipbuilders are delighted that there is to be a new royal yacht. In the absence of orders to meet long-established MoD requirements for replacement submarines and air defence destroyers, the few shipyards we have left are forced to grab at any straw that is available.

Public debate on the Royal Navy seems mostly concerned with Britannia and the fate of Greenwich and Admiralty Arch, all of which are important to our national heritage and self-esteem, but contribute nothing in a military sense to the defence of vital maritime interests.

Is the future of the Services to be an issue in the general election campaign? Or are we content to take on trust political assurances that our Armed Forces will continue to be the "best" in the world, while arguing fiercely about who pays for a new royal yacht?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD SHARPE,
Editor,
Jane's Fighting Ships,
Foundry House,
Kingsley, Bordon, Hampshire,
January 22.

From Commander Nick Messenger, Editor of Tall Ship International

Sir, Your editorial today concerning the planned replacement for the Royal Yacht Britannia is to be commended. Why not a "majestic, square-rigged sailing ship"? She would indeed be more eye-catching than any motorised yacht.

There is a global renaissance in tall ships and this once pre-eminent maritime nation of ours richly deserves its own Class A fully-rigged ship. Besides, just about every other maritime nation worth its salt has one. However, I find it difficult to justify

such enormous expense, £60 million, entirely from the public purse. But if such a vessel could be subsidised by British industry, and manned by the youth of Great Britain, then I'm sure the project would achieve my full support.

Young people, from all walks of life, could compete to sail in her as crew. What a magnificent accolade for Duke of Edinburgh Award winners and top "Queen's Cadets" from the newly proposed school corps.

Yours sincerely,
NICK MESSENGER,
Editor,
Tall Ship International,
Guggenheim Farm, Stalbridge, Dorset,
January 23.

From Mr H. W. Cooke

Sir, How is it that the Government can say that the new Britannia will be built in a British shipyard? Surely EU procurement regulations require that contracts for goods and services over approximately £150,000 and for works over £4 million be put out to tender?

Yours faithfully,
H. W. COOKE,
570 Queensferry Road, Edinburgh,
January 23.

From Mr Robin Watson

Sir, I found it disturbing that on the same day as your headline proclaims the £60 million funding of a replacement for Britannia, my local paper's headline warned of the closure of 23 libraries in Kent. The reason for the closure, apparently, is the cutback in central government funding to the county council.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN WATSON,
The Old Vicarage,
Netheravon, nr Sevenoaks, Kent,
January 23.

Comparative art

From Mr Dennis Berry

Sir, I usually read Richard Cork's writings on contemporary art with amusement, but his comments on Tony Cragg's current exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery ("Beauty found in our daily junk", Arts, January 14) I am afraid go beyond such indulgent toleration.

To suggest that Cragg is in any way reminiscent of Leonardo, with whom he is united because of their instinctive fascination with science, is preposterous. So it was all due to the time Cragg spent working as a laboratory technician? Junk indeed!

Yours faithfully,
DENNIS BERRY,
11 Fairacre,
Acacia Grove,
New Malden, Surrey,
January 15.

Soft fruit?

From Mr John B. Harris

Sir, When I played it was lemons at half-time for rugger (report, January 18). Oranges were for girls' hockey.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN B. HARRIS,
15 Chartwell House,
12 Ladbrooke Terrace, W11,
January 19.

Water buffalo

From Dr Simon Strickland

Sir, One should not be dissuaded from farming buffalo by their purported unwholesome habits or unpredictable temperament (letters, January 7, 13, 17).

Although having never moved more speedily than when being charged by an irate bull that, about to be slaughtered for a Gurkha funeral, broke its tether as I attempted to take its photograph, I have often enjoyed buff steaks, fresh creamy milk and yoghurts in the Middle Hills of Nepal.

Moreover, the wonders of its hide are not to be underestimated: my buffalo-skin wallet, made in England and purchased in 1982, must surely have lasted longer than many a costlier alternative.

Yours sincerely,
SIMON STRICKLAND,
98 Thanet House,
Thanet Street, WC1,
January 18.

From Mr Roy Mundén

Sir, I disagree with Mr Terence Parsons and Mr Peter Bayley about the eating qualities of water buffalo (letters, January 17).

On leaving Hong Kong in 1951 I spent most of the following 15 years in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. Although steak was rarely part of my diet I enjoyed the occasional succulent and tender cut of well hung, slightly coarse-grained, dark "beef".

It was only on my return to Hong Kong in 1966 that I realised what an insipid flavour real beef has when compared with water buffalo.

Anyone who has used brisket or shin of water buffalo in a stew will never willingly use beef again for this dish.

Yours sincerely,
R. V. MUNDÉN,
Lower Woodbrook,
Luton, Taunton, Somerset,
January 17.

OBITUARIES

'COLONEL' TOM PARKER

Colonel Tom Parker, promoter and agent of Elvis Presley, died on January 21 aged 57. He was born on June 26, 1939.

As a circus barker in the early 1950s American Deep South, Tom Parker had run a troupe of dancing chickens, until in 1955 he met a tall, thin, dark-skinned, leonine, called Elvis Presley who had ambitions to sing. Parker turned the young man into the best-known rock star in the world and made himself a fortune.

Until Presley's early death in 1977 he exercised total control over his protégé. Some accused him of exploitation, but he insisted that his conscience was clear.

Anyone who hoped to approach Presley had to go through "Colonel" Parker — the title, purely honorific, was bestowed by the Governor of Louisiana in 1948. His physical bulk was imposing, as were the cigars he smoked. But Presley appeared to appreciate the protection Parker gave him, even though the manager took sometimes as much as 50 per cent of his earnings. He called Parker and his wife Marie "the finest people in the world".

Parker was the son of an authoritarian, ex-military father, who bullied him in front of his peers. The experience bred in him a deep mistrust of other people's motives. Although he claimed he was born in West Virginia, he was actually Dutch, born Andreas Cornelius van Kuijk in Breda, Holland.

His father died when he was 16 and he stowed away on a ship and sailed for America where he reinvented himself, becoming Tom Parker. He

had a brief career in the US Army, with the artillery in Hawaii.

From 1932 he worked in circuses, travelling through small Southern towns arranging advertising and getting to know the Country and Western singers who hung around the circuses. For a few years he managed the singer Eddy Arnold in Nashville. Later he established links with the William Morris Agency in New York and with RCA. By the late 1940s Parker had become one of the most prominent promoters in Nashville.

He met Elvis at a gig in Memphis, Tennessee, and organised for him a series of bookings, the first in Carlsbad, New Mexico. At that time Presley called himself the Hillbilly Cat. On Parker's advice he quickly dropped the name. Because Elvis was under age, his parents' permission was required to hand over control of him to Parker. Gladys, Presley's dominating mother, stalled before eventually being coerced into signing.

The initial contract was an extraordinarily favourable instrument for Parker. Elvis was obliged to make 100 personal appearances for \$200 each, and to share that fee among his musicians, at the same time as giving Parker a large slice of his earnings. No lawyers were consulted to look at the agreement which stood until four years after Presley's death. Once hired, Parker ended an arrangement the singer had with the small Sun record label and arranged a rich new contract with RCA Records. At \$35,000 it brought Presley unimaginable riches. But he quickly showed that it had been worth every cent when he produced the hit *Heartbreak Hotel* which outsold all other records in 1956.



Tom Parker with his protégé Elvis Presley

In many ways, Parker seems to have taken over from Gladys as the ruling force in Presley's life. Some thought he even looked a little like Gladys, with his double chin and his penchant for loose-fitting, flowered shirts. He controlled Presley as tightly as any parent. "If you ever do anything to make me ashamed of you," he told Presley in the early days, "we're through."

Parker was particularly worried about Presley's womanising, which occasionally threatened to get out of control. Shrewdly, though, he knew that it also helped to fuel the Presley myth as a "dangerous" performer.

From 1960 onwards, after Presley had served his time in the Army, Parker persuaded him to appear in a string of films known as "chick flicks". They paid handsomely, but several times when Presley was offered decent dramatic roles — in *Thunder Road*

(1958) and *A Star is Born* (1976) — Parker ruined the deal by asking for too much money.

Nevertheless, by 1964 Presley was worth \$35 million, thanks not only to his records and films, but also to the large array of Elvis merchandise which Parker had developed. The one field of enterprise which the manager neglected was foreign concert tours. The reason, it was rumoured, was that Parker did not want to leave the United States for fear

of not passing muster with the immigration authorities on his re-entry into the country. After Presley's career hit a blank period in the later 1960s Parker masterminded a comeback in Las Vegas in 1969, and oversaw the star's later incarnation as a cabaret entertainer. As inseparable as the two appeared, it was only after Presley's death that it emerged just how unfavourable to the entertainer and his estate their financial arrangements had been.

In 1973 Parker had reached an agreement with RCA Records which controlled the rights to all of Presley's recordings. For \$5.4 million, Presley waived his rights to future royalties on the 700 recordings he had then made. No less than 50 per cent of this immediately went to Parker. So, after tax, Presley had made only \$1.35 million for the rights to one of the most valuable bodies of musical work ever. After his death, when pressing plants across America worked around the clock to fill the demand for Presley's albums, it was estimated that Presley's estate had lost several hundred million dollars.

His heirs sued Parker for fraud and mismanagement. A court ruled that he had no further right to the Presley estate. But Parker was left a wealthy man from his years with Presley. He retired to Las Vegas, and worked for the Hilton Hotels Corporation as an entertainment adviser. He refused several offers to write about his years with Presley. "They want dirt," he said, "but I am not a dirt farmer."

His first wife Marie died in 1980. He is survived by his second wife Loanne. There were no children of either marriage.

SIR TOBIAS RODGERS, Bt

Sir Tobias Rodgers, 2nd Baronet, antiquarian bookseller, died in London on January 19 after a haemorrhage aged 56. He was born on July 2, 1940.

TOBIAS RODGERS was one of the most gifted and learned booksellers of his generation, a man with an exceptional knowledge of the history of books (and a picture as well) together with an encyclopaedic knowledge of places and dates of publication. His specialism was Spain and all things Hispanic but he had a profound knowledge of English books as well.

He could have risen to the heights in the trade; if he failed to do so, it was for reasons of personality rather than ability. His professional life was not well complemented by his private life as one of the great Bohemians of his time — "more of a boulevardier than a bookseller" as he described himself all too accurately in one of his own catalogues.

John Fairlie Tobias Rodgers was the elder of two sons of Sir John Rodgers. His father was for nearly 30 years Tory MP for Sevenoaks and a former leader of the Conservative delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. In 1964 he became — apart from Sir Denis Thatcher in 1991 — one of the last baronets to be created.

Toby was educated at a scholar at Eton and at Worcester College, Oxford. He was one of the cleverest members of a clever generation and was confidently expected to get a first and even win an All Souls fellowship. In the event, he left Oxford without a degree; he had contracted encephalitis and was unable to sit schools.

He sometimes implied that this illness might have permanently impaired his faculties, though there was little outward sign of this for many years afterwards. Although he never became a professional scholar, he had already found the intellectual and emotional love of his life in Spain. An excellent linguist, he spoke fluent Spanish and came to know the country intimately, and sometimes clandestinely, in the Franco era.

After a while kicking his heels in London as a foreign language teacher, he lighted on his true métier in antiquarian bookselling. His first job was with the illustrious house of Bernard Quaritch (where one of his tasks was choosing books for Elizabeth Taylor to give to Richard Burton). In 1968 he went into partnership with Paul Grinke, another young bookseller.

Although their firm was short-lived, its brilliant catalogues, mostly of early English books, were praised by the authoritative *Book Collector*. Rodgers's gifts were also recognised by professionals of an older generation like Anthony Hobson and John Carter.

After several years with Christie's he set up his own business. For some time he owned a bookshop in Cecil Court, that bibliophile's paradise between Charing Cross Road and St Martin's Lane. It was named *Quevedo*, after the picaresque, not to say lewd and satirical, 17th-century Spanish writer who was a favourite of his.

But the shop was eventually closed, and during the 1980s and early 1990s his business was dormant to the puzzle of his friends and which should have been recorded by a Creevey, Concorde or Scott Fitzgerald. Even up till last November, when he was all too visibly weak, he was still the annual organiser and animating spirit of the fireworks party in the communal gardens behind his flat.

He is survived by his mother and by his younger brother Piers, Secretary of the Royal Academy from 1982 until 1996, who inherits the baronetcy.

it was so salty and wittily written that Bernard Levin was inspired to devote a whole *Times* column to it. Its star item was a book containing a Hiliard miniature, which the V & A purchased. Another catalogue followed shortly after, written again in Rodgers's authentic style and including, most remarkably of all, the original *cedula* or official document from the Emperor Charles V which empowered Cristobal Vaca de Castro to investigate Pizarro's misdeeds in Peru in 1540 and thereby sealed his fate.

The catalogue also poignantly offered for sale "my own working library", in the form of a matchless collection of books and ephemera on the Spanish Civil War. Selling this was a recognition of defeat: "I very much doubt that 35 years of germination will ever flower into the book on Spanish anarchism that I intended for so long to write."

Rodgers was, in fact, a gifted writer as well as an exceptionally well-read man. He showed this on a frivolous level when he wrote a glossy magazine restaurant column, though not for long. He could, and should, have written on the subjects which enthralled him and which he knew backwards, jazz and movies as



well as old books and Spain. More than once he tried to write a book but seemed to lack the perseverance rather than the ability to finish one.

His health had sadly been failing for some years before his death; sadder still, some of his ill was self-inflicted. He was a natural Bohemian, whose restlessness and unreliability were part of his charm. But what had once been high-spirited bibulous dissipation became something more seclusive and destructive. He was brave in facing up to this. And yet in his last years he gave the impression that he no longer really wanted to survive, to the despair of those who loved him.

There were very many of them. A dry list of professional accomplishments gives no sense of Toby Rodgers's personal popularity and gift for friendship. He never married, but he was the lover of many women, most of whom remember him with affection, albeit sometimes tinged with exasperation at his ways, and resignation at the impossibility of reforming them.

He was a considerable figure in London social life, who cooked admirably when entertaining to dinner, and whose flat in Warwick Avenue was, from the 1970s to the 1990s, the scene for many meetings of his friends, which should have been recorded by a Creevey, Concorde or Scott Fitzgerald. Even up till last November, when he was all too visibly weak, he was still the annual organiser and animating spirit of the fireworks party in the communal gardens behind his flat.

He is survived by his mother and by his younger brother Piers, Secretary of the Royal Academy from 1982 until 1996, who inherits the baronetcy.

MYFANWY PIPER

Myfanwy Piper, art critic and librettist, died on January 18 aged 85. She was born on March 28, 1911.

MYFANWY PIPER made a threefold contribution to the arts in Britain. As a critic and editor in the 1930s, she was influential in the British reception of European abstract art; as the wife of the painter John Piper, she gave support and inspiration to a versatile and successful artist for more than fifty years; and as a librettist

for Benjamin Britten, she played a vital part in the creation of some of the most important 20th-century British operas.

She had a natural talent for collaboration, and working with Britten drew on it to the full. As Peter Pezars observed: "Britten's natural language was music; he was more at home with notes, pitches and sounds than he was with words." This added greatly to the responsibility of the librettists who worked with him. "The words had to illumi-

nate, by exactness and simplicity," Myfanwy Piper realised after watching the composer at work in rehearsal, "and each one had to be ready to repeat when Britten needed it." With literary sources as elusive as the stories by Henry James and Thomas Mann which were Piper's starting point, that was no easy task; but she discharged it with subtle aplomb in her adaptations of *The Turn of the Screw* (1954), *Owen Wingrave* (1970) and *Death in Venice* (1973).

She later wrote an absorbing account of working with Britten, "not all smooth going" and not without what she called "bombsHELLs", but singularly fruitful. "Again and again," she recalled, "he made me expand the text with a liveliness that my too-slavish attention to the original might have failed to do. Alterations or modifications were always evoked, never dictated. There was a positive and continuing pleasure and pride in working with him."

Mary Myfanwy Evans was brought up in Hampstead,

where her Welsh father ran a chemist's shop. From the North London Collegiate School she won an exhibition to read English at St Hugh's College, Oxford. There she captained the winning university swimming team in 1932.

Through the painter Ivon Hitchens, at a painting party on the Suffolk coast near Aldeburgh in 1934, she met John Piper. They married in 1937 and made their home, for the rest of their sternerly creative but warmly hospitable lives, at Fawley Bottom, below steep Chiltern beechwoods. It became a centre of what their friend Kenneth Clark called "civilisation".

In 1935 Myfanwy Piper had founded and run *Aids*, an English review of abstract art which during its two-year life brought the latest European developments to British attention. John Piper was at this time essentially an abstract painter, but he and Myfanwy soon began to move towards an art more directly rooted in the observable world.

In 1937 Myfanwy edited a collection of essays, *The Painter's Object*, and wrote an illuminating book on the painter Francis Hodgkins. She provided some sensitive catalogue introductions for artists she admired.

John Piper worked closely

with Benjamin Britten for almost thirty years, designing many of his operas from *The Rape of Lucretia* in 1946 to *Death in Venice* in 1973. Myfanwy was naturally involved in this mutually inspired working relationship, which was governed, as John Piper wrote, by the principle of "a united front by all participants from the first note on paper to the first night". She was an active participant almost from the beginning, as librettist for *The Turn of the Screw*, first performed in Venice in 1954.

That libretto may well be her greatest achievement. Working closely with Britten (often over the phone), she matched and even tautened the tension of Henry James's narrative. Her husband contributed one of his finest sets.

As well as her two further Britten operas, she went on to collaborate as librettist with the composers Alun Hoddinott and Malcolm Williamson, and to write a play based on Kierkegaard's *Diary of a Seducer* for the Danish actor Erik Mørk.

John Piper died in 1992. Myfanwy nursed him with devotion in his last illness, during which their eldest son, Edward, an artist and photographer, died. She is survived by two daughters and a son.



Myfanwy Piper with Benjamin Britten

PERSONAL COLUMN

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

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